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Jerry Brown: Nothing to Everyone

by T.D. Allman

July 1979 \$1.50

Harper's

LIVING TO BE OLD

The first generation of full-timers by Ronald Blythe



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Fussell: BORDER CROSSINGS

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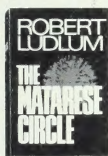
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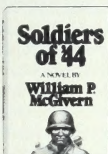
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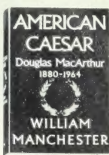
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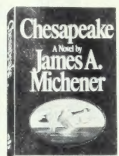
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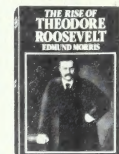
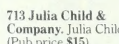
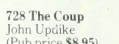
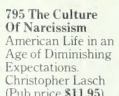
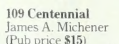
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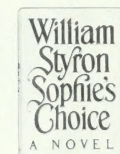
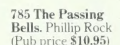
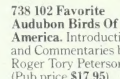
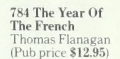
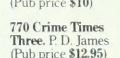
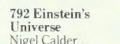
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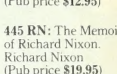
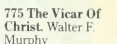
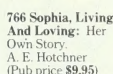
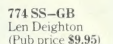
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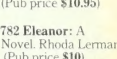
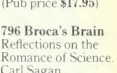
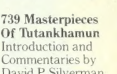
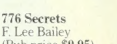
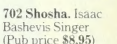
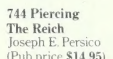
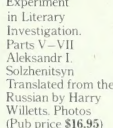
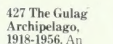


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America's freight railroads provide the safest, most efficient transportation on wheels.

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Even in an era of limits, California runs a surplus and has a governor whose ambition is boundless. Though Brown may lack programs and principles, he is satisfied that his desires are in harmony with the universe.

Jack Richardson 21 LIFE ON THE CARD

Money is dirty, and paying cash merely arouses suspicion. The citizen is known by the cards he carries and is as good as his line of credit.

Walter Karp 27 REPUBLICAN VIRTUES

To love America because one cherishes liberty is republican patriotism. The nation, the republic's deadly rival, is a hollow shell.

Ronald Blythe 35 LIVING TO BE OLD

"Whom the gods love die young," Menander wrote in the second century B.C. With so many people now living into their seventies and eighties—full-term lives—old age has become a common predicament. One of the fearful developments for the old is that, in their eyes, society views them as another species.

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LETTERS

SALT's security

I find myself in profound and painful disagreement with Robert Johansen's argument that SALT II is not worth supporting ["Arms Bazaar," May]. On the contrary, I feel deeply that it is worth supporting, and that its defeat in the Senate would have the most tragic consequences for our country and the world.

Let me first make clear two major points with which I do agree. First, it would be extremely foolish to oversell SALT II—just as it was foolish to oversell SALT I and détente—or to claim that it will achieve more than modest measures of arms control. Many of Mr. Johansen's arguments about its shortcomings are well taken, though he has failed to balance those with an account of what it *does* accomplish, which is far from being as insignificant as he claims.

Second, I agree heartily that our long-term objective should be the abolition of the war system, "general and complete disarmament," and the transfer to international institutions of responsibility for keeping the peace among nations. I have worked as best I can for these ends for many years. It must be obvious to the most casual observer, however, that public opinion in this country and all others is still far from believing these goals are "realistic" or acceptable, and that, unless some awesome nuclear catastrophe occurs, these opinions are only going to be changed slowly and incrementally.

All too often in human history the best is the enemy of the better. Tragically, liberal reformers often join misguided conservatives in defeating those incremental steps that, woefully insufficient as they may seem, are the only means by which, in our shortsighted world, progress can be made.

I have seen the Versailles Treaty and the League of Nations defeated in the U.S. Senate in 1919, partly because they fell far short of what many had

hoped for them. The result was, however, not to make Versailles or League any better but to withdraw the United States from a responsible role in the reconstruction and stabilization of Europe, and thus to help bring World War II. I have seen much of the Left in Weimar Germany refuse to cooperate with the center because 'things get bad enough, the people will turn to us.' Instead they turned to the Nazis. I have seen Richard Nixon one admirable domestic initiative for a guaranteed minimum income defeated in the U.S. Senate by an unholy alliance of conservatives and liberals, by the latter because "it didn't go far enough." These examples could be multiplied *ad infinitum*.

If the SALT II treaty should be rejected, we would almost certainly see an unlimited and unrestrained nuclear arms race far beyond the magnitude that so disturb us today. The United States would be spending tens of billions *more* for strategic weapons than the admittedly excessive amounts it will be spending with the treaty. Many of our allies and most of the Third World would judge, as the President said in his speech to the Newspaper Publishers, that "America had chosen confrontation rather than cooperation and peace." Tensions between the Soviet Union and ourselves would intensify geometrically around the globe and the risks of war would correspondingly increase.

Admitting its obvious shortcomings if SALT II is rejected the consequence would *not* be to produce something better, but to interrupt the only feasible process that will permit us to move toward rather than away from the ultimate goals Mr. Johansen shares.

CHARLES W. YOST
Co-chairman
Americans for SALT
Washington, D.C.

ROBERT C. JOHANSEN REPLIES:

Mr. Yost apparently agrees that even

th the ratification of SALT II the arms buildup will continue, military expenditures will rise, and many strategic nuclear warheads will be added to present arsenals. Nonetheless he believes that SALT II must be ratified because it will slow the pace of the arms buildup. In contrast, I conclude that the SALT treaty and its accompanying plans in Moscow and Washington for new weapons will not restrict the pace of the most destabilizing weapons innovations enough—if at all—to reduce arms or increase security. Although I am not putting energy into the ratification effort, I oppose those who seek to defeat the treaty because they want to produce even more weapons.

One should understand that the treaty has been carefully gerrymandered by the advocates of new arms to ensure that the weapons they most want to develop will not be prohibited. The SALT II treaty is a typical product of the arms-control approach to security: every international commitment to restrict an old weapon (like the Minute-man—which we did not want more of

anyway) is coupled with a domestic commitment to deploy a new weapon (like the Trident, the M-X, or the cruise missile). The SALT treaties guide the expansion of the war system. They do not decrease the role of military power in human transactions or bring a peace system. They do not promise the abolition of war.

During the past decade, SALT has given an early legitimacy to weapons on the drawing board and encouraged their later deployment even though they had no security justification. Congressional debate about *whether* to deploy a weapon is displaced by the SALT debate about *how many* to deploy. In this way domestic targets for new deployments are disguised as international ceilings for arms control. After conducting exhaustive hearings on the arms procurement that accompanied the policy-formulation process for SALT I, Sen. Edmund Muskie concluded: "My suspicion is that the SALT talks actually stimulated the arms race rather than stabilized it."

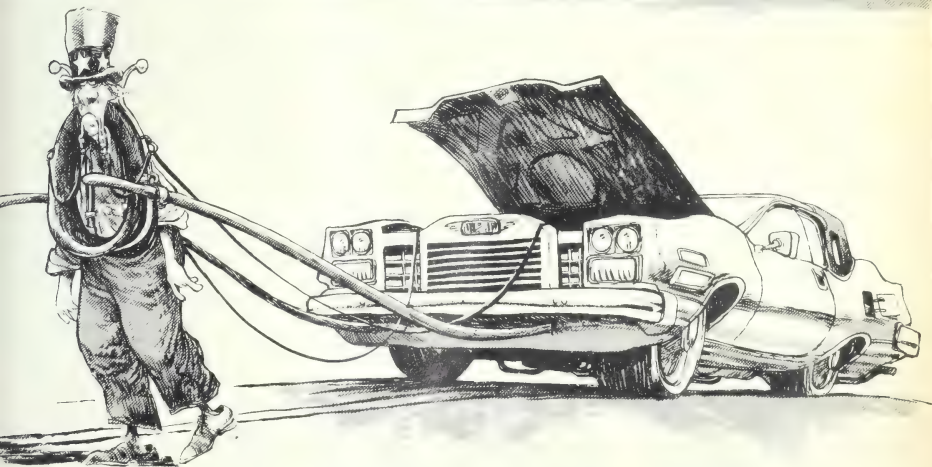
Despite the doubt that SALT II will reduce arms rather than further legi-

timize nuclear deterrence, Mr. Yost reminds me that "the best is the enemy of the better." A reminder perhaps more appropriate for the SALT II treaty is that the failure to adapt behavior to changing conditions has led many species to extinction. Nuclear technology tests our willingness to break the military habit—a test that we show no sign of being able to pass.

In the early 1800s, were people who advocated abolition of slavery in an "unholy alliance" with those who wanted to maintain slavery? Had we been living then, should we have encouraged a compromise that would merely limit the number of slaves in the two leading slave states, while legitimizing new uses of other slaves and the institution of slavery in general? Or would we think such a "limitation" insufficient?

We are less secure today and our military strategy is less morally justifiable than when SALT began. Less than six years from now, when SALT II is scheduled to expire, Soviet forces will possess "only" forty times the firepower needed to destroy the United States, instead of being able to destroy

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times over, as might be possible about SALT. Are we to commit our lives to ratification of these achievements? I choose to be an abolitionist.

The value of children

Scott Spencer's theory in "Childhood's End" [May] that modern society resents children is supported by dubious evidence.

Spencer argues that advocacy of population limitation signifies hostility to children based on the selfish desire for luxuries. Instead it is in large part motivated by the wish to give kids a better chance to prevent teenage pregnancies; to lower birthrates in countries where children starve; and among the middle classes to ensure such things as good medical and dental care, and higher education. When orthodontics may cost a couple of thousand dollars, and a college education \$20,000 with possibly another \$20,000 for training for a profession, only wealthy parents or those who give little thought to their children's future will spawn a lot of kids.

ERNEST EARNEST
Gladwyne, Pa.

Achieving the plastic pleasure dome of affluence at the price of child love and family life—at home and abroad—has been a Faustian bargain for our civilization. Indeed, one cannot help but reflect that the Shakers did not believe in children either. They left us only artifacts.

KURT SIMMONS
Delmar, N.Y.

Church and state

Simon Winchester's contention ["Invitation to a Hanging," May] that we should not criticize public hangings in Pakistan because of the "local meaning" of such punishments, and because it would be improper to impose a "liberal Western judgment" upon a "properly non-Western event," might have hit home, except for one obvious point: executions cannot be assumed to be an internal matter between the accused and their political/religious leaders.

KATHERINE GORDON
New Paltz, N.Y.

Reading Simon Winchester's article on present-day Pakistan, I had the distinct feeling that the chickens were at last coming home to roost. The partition of India on the basis of religion was an anachronism, and it is doubtful that such an absurd division could have taken place without the tacit support that the Muslim League enjoyed from the British colonial government. Is it not ironic that Pakistan has now become an Islamic fundamentalist nation, and, like Iran, is rejecting Western values?

M. MAZUMDAR
Pittsburgh, Pa.

A fearsome compromise

Harper's is to be congratulated for publishing Andrei Amalrik's fine article "Victims of Yalta" [May]. Few people in this country or the world know anything about the forced repatriation of Russian soldiers to the Soviet Union in 1945, and no official explanation has ever been forthcoming from the British or American governments.

The urge to appease the Soviet monster persists today. There are those who would have the West disarm itself in the hope that the Russians would do the same. If anything is to be learned from Nikolai Tolstoy's *Secret Betrayal*, which Mr. Amalrik reviewed, it is that feeding a monster only makes it stronger and hungrier.

WILLIAM T. BROCKMAN
Atlanta, Ga.

The Congressional record

Robert Lekachman reports that I have given up on welfare reform ["Looking for the Left," April]. May I say that this is not so, although I am at times tempted to give up on my good friend Professor Lekachman.

He is a man of the Left, for which I respect him. But he is addicted to that rhetorical device of the Left which holds that until everything changes, nothing changes. This is a fundamental distinction between politics of the center and leftist politics. As Senator Dirksen once put it, I tend to hold the latter in minimum high regard.

In 1962, as an Assistant Secretary of Labor, I wrote for President Ken-

nedy a policy paper on family allowances. I have thus been involved with problems of income maintenance for some seventeen years, during which time a great deal has changed. In 1962, for example, Congress enacted the Supplemental Retirement Income Program, a guaranteed income for the aged, the blind, and the disabled. This was only one portion of the Family Assistance Program to survive, but scarcely the least important. Beginning in 1963, earned-income tax credits, a kind of family allowance, began to be available to low-income families. In the latest tax bill the Congress, led by the Senate Committee on Finance, raised the income limit for this tax credit such that henceforth almost a quarter of American families with children would now be eligible.

There is more to do. Some of us are still here, still at it. Seventeen years in fact rather a short period in which to achieve a large objective.

DANIEL PATRICK MOYNIHAN
U.S. Senator (D-N.H.)
Washington, D.C.

ROBERT LEKACHMAN REPLIES:

Senator Moynihan's amiable approach fails to persuade me that the current view on welfare reform does not amount to abandonment of the principles of income maintenance that he justly reminds us, he has advocated for many years. His own bill of last year does indeed provide fiscal relief for New York, but at the steep price of leaving almost unaltered the mass of inequities and disincentives for family stability against which few voices have been more eloquently raised in the past than the Senator's. For the moment at least, the temptation to give up on each other strikes me mutual.

We are proud to announce that The Poetry Society of America has presented Hayden Carruth, the poetry editor of *Harper's*, with this year's Shelley Memorial Award, an annual presentation to a poet of genius for the body of his work. Mr. Carruth's first collection of poems, *The Crow and the Hart*, appeared in 1959. His most recent collection, *Brothers, I Loved You All* (Sheep Meadow Press), was published last fall.

HARPER'S/JULY 1971

GUESTS OF THE MANAGEMENT

The literary imagination in exile

by Lewis H. Lapham

SOMETIMES WONDER why so many writers of my generation and acquaintance regard themselves as tourists traveling in an alien wilderness. If they could be asked to fill out a passport stating their metaphysical country of origin, I suspect that it would never occur to them to give their nationality as American. Instead, they would identify themselves as Catholics or southerners, as utopians or counterrevolutionaries, but always as discerning visitors from a better world (frequently confused with their childhood), passing through town on their way to Europe or Los Angeles or the English department at Yale. Those among them who write novels feel obliged to devote the first few hundred pages to establishing their convenience, as if their lives might be evaluated as objects of art.

Their detachment from the native anthropology is partly a matter of literary convention. The modernist doctrines taught in the schools over the past twenty or thirty years require the writer with pretensions to universality to conceive of the world as a metaphor. Because James Joyce proved that it is impossible to know anything other than oneself, the society at large remains at best a fiction. Any description of the theoretical construct known as "the real world" can be left to the journalists and Harold Robbins. The authors of detective novels might still take the trouble to explain the workings of an automobile or a weapons factory, but the writer who aspires to keep company with the immortals learns to affect a well-bred disdain for commerce and trade. He achieves his effects in the

precious metals of symbolism. Language becomes an end in itself, the imagination a vehicle for escaping reality rather than a means of grasping or apprehending it.

For as long as I have been going to the *levées* of the New York literary salons I don't think that I have met more than two or three people who know much about the specific weights and measures of economics, medicine, history, law, finance, physics, or human anatomy. Even reading in these subjects apparently has become distasteful, as if they constitute too ominous a reminder of the world's rigor and contingency. A few weeks ago I spoke to a critic who reported that he had seen a child drown in a flood. The child's death impressed him as being faintly vulgar. Not so much frightful or shocking as a transgression against the canons of good taste. He went on to explain that what has become inconceivable for both the writers and readers of "serious" fiction is the possibility of anybody becoming implicated in the realm of action. Even the smallest of actions might prove catastrophic—if not to oneself then possibly to a cousin or a newt—and so it is best to do nothing at all. The characters define themselves by virtue of their moral and aesthetic attitudes and by the mutual recognition (or, more often, nonrecognition) of states of refined feeling.

A second reason for the general disassociation from the American experience has to do with the difficulty of finding an audience for literature. The existence of a literature presupposes a literate and coherent public. *Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.*

that has both the time to read, and the need to take seriously, the works of the literary imagination. The United States hasn't had such a public since the victory of World War II. The society lacks a common agreement as to its history, its character, and its hope for the future, with the result that the arts in all their forms and expressions have disintegrated into as many fragments as the sciences. Instead of one public there are many publics, each of them speaking in code and all of them advancing the causes of political or emotional faction. The solipsism of American writing in the present generation argues not so much for the lack of literary genius as for the loss of a national theater of ideas in which writers (as well as painters or chemists or politicians) can perform the acts of the moral or artistic imagination. Nobody can decide whether these acts should be performed on a stage, in dumb show, or on a trapeze. In place of a theater of ideas the cultural impresarios provide buildings designed by I. M. Pei; they resolve the aesthetic dilemma by booking into the arena any act that can draw a crowd. The rules of egalitarian protocol forbid them from making invidious distinctions among poets, magicians, and performing bears.

No wonder the bookstores resemble circuses and fairs. The thousands of books so gaudily tricked up on the shelves, each of them possessed of a voice (either human or recorded), compete among themselves in the wheedling din of gypsy fortune-tellers, of jugglers and acrobats clamoring for a few coins, amidst the harsh cries of money-changers, animal trainers, her-

balists, cooks, sorcerers, augurs, gamblers, military captains, whores, thieves, merchants, and dealers in horses and religion.

The noisy spectacle obliterates the hope of thought, much to the relief of the half-educated and newly literate crowds who come to buy an astrological chart or a map of lost treasure. Americans tend to prefer the uses of power to the uses of freedom, and the heirs to the great fortune that fell to their lot in 1945 assumed that they had inherited not only the goods and chattels of the earth but also the spoils of intellect accumulated over centuries in the vaults of Western civilization. They wished to acquire and consume the products of the artistic imagination (somewhat comparable in the general conception to a vineyard in Bordeaux), and they had neither the patience nor the need to experience art. The study of literature, like that of any other art, offers as its reward freedom of mind and spaciousness of thought. Neither of these possessions makes much of a show in the world, and for the most part they are thought to be superfluous. Freedom, like reason, is a privilege conferred at birth, merely another of the things inherited with the Purdy shotgun and the house in Maine, and therefore not something to worry about. People excited by power can make a more satisfactory display of their newfound sensibility by going to the opening of the opera at Lincoln Center, by collecting the season's new paintings as they would collect the season's new clothes, by gorging themselves on words.

In nineteenth-century France the newly enriched bourgeoisie crowded into the restaurants invented for their amazement (as well as in the hope of returning them to penury), and there, complacent under the chandeliers, they professed themselves duly astounded by the sauces of Escoffier. They took the food extremely seriously, solemnly digesting the most expensive trifles, not daring to express a naive opinion for fear of making some atrocious blunder in the presence of the waiters. The same air of heavy significance distinguishes the *nouveaux littéraires* ennobled in their hundreds of thousands by university degrees in the past thirty years, solemnly consuming the *rôti de Barth*, the *mousse au Sontag*, and the *prix*

fixe offered by the Book-of-the-Month Club. Rather than be proved ridiculous by what the critics might say in the *New York Times*, the clientele makes itself sick on fantasy and nihilism in cream.

WHEN TAKEN together with the precepts of modernism and the fugitive character of the audience for literature, the complexity and size of the American experience (susceptible to contradictory readings and interpretations) further encourages the literary professional to adopt the pose of a tourist or exile. How can the poor fellow possibly illuminate a society of which he has seen so small a part? In what language or tone of voice can he address a minister of state, a financier, or a nuclear physicist?

Prior to the twentieth century, the bulk of the world's literature was written by men who had some knowledge of business or the state. I think of Sophocles and Thucydides (both of them military commanders), of Seneca, Cicero, and Caesar (all politicians), of Montaigne, Bacon, Donne, Pascal, Fielding, Gibbon, Burke, Jefferson, Franklin, Tocqueville, Trollope, Stendhal, Lincoln, Huysmans, Marx, Bismarck, Keynes, Cavafy, de Gaulle, Malraux, Churchill, and Freud. The enormous wealth of the United States has made possible the existence of a verbal class that need do nothing but produce objects of language as ornate, and often as lifeless and heavy, as the jeweled chalices and gold figurines contrived for the greater glory of medieval popes. Organized into subsidiary guilds, the members of this class talk chiefly to themselves—weapons analyst to weapons analyst, historian to historian, public relations counsel to public relations counsel, lawyer to lawyer, novelist to novelist, and so forth through the hierarchy of intelligible discourse. The guild makes a profession of reading books and forming opinions; it feeds off itself, writing about the act of writing, producing commentaries on commentaries.

Every now and then I go to one of those melancholy seminars at which, almost continuously for twenty years, the well-known authors of the moment ask each other ponderous questions about the fate of American letters.

Everybody talks about the transmigration of the American novel, about the quality of truth to be found in journalism, about the decay of criticism. When listening to the set speeches I ask myself who reads the novels of Norman Mailer except the people who have reason to write about the novels of Norman Mailer. Is it conceivable that the physicists at the Livermore laboratories look to the stories of Joseph Heller to inform their speculation about the nature of the universe, or that Cyrus Vance, en route to yet another disappointing exchange of views with an Islamic tyrant, rummages through the novels of John Irving for the hope of finding some hint as to the purpose of diplomacy?

The questions reduce themselves to absurdity, and the writers of the present generation, well aware of the absurdity, come to think of themselves as guests of the management. What else can a poor scribbler do but sing and dance and play with the toys of words? Joseph Heller makes bleak jokes about the inanity of Washington, D.C., because he has no choice in the matter. Knowing nothing about why or how the government functions, he makes the virtue of necessity and presents his ignorance as wit. Other writers seek to curry favor with their unseen hosts by transforming themselves into clowns or prophets, offering parodies and satires, never knowing what will endear them to the audience behind the screen—an audience that, for reasons unstated, may or may not be amused. Thus the vogue for autobiographies of the part of so many writers still in the twenties or thirties. Surely the managers must also have been children; surely they will listen to the confessions of a young girl's youth and early sorrows. Although brought to the highest pitches of sentiment by the woman diarists, the genre also embraces the novels of middle-aged English professors. Even at the age of forty they send postcards from Europe or academia. Being observant lads, they notice sexual comings and goings in the dormitories or on the lawns, and somewhere in the drunken summer darkness they're sure there lurks the answer to Donne's question about who cleft the devil's foot. But they still do not know what Daddy does when he gets off the train in New York or Washington, or how he gets the money that pa-



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Or consider the novels purporting to bear witness to the Vietnam war, whose I have read eloquently convey the emotion of combat but nothing about the density of warfare or the ambiguity of command. The war, like everything else, has become a metaphor. It takes place in the timeless present of a medieval morality play or the romances of J.R.R. Tolkien. Unlike Tolstoy writing about the Napoleonic wars, or Robert Graves writing about World War I, the American writers on Vietnam cannot render the historical coordinates of a specific time and place. They have gone off on an ill-conceived summer vacation; the experience proved to be unpleasant, but as to how or why they got there they have heard only rumors.

TO THE EXTENT that the writers of the present generation feel themselves intimidated, impotent, or enraged, their vision of the world tends to narrow and shrivel. In modern fiction, as in modern painting or television, the techniques of abstraction (i.e., of making the part a surrogate for the whole) reduce the scale of conception to an oblique fragment of talk between two or three characters on an empty stage. The writers produce miniatures, and the painters work within the limits of minimalist art. Their ambition becomes as small as the coteries that make up their audiences. In the less-crowded space of the nineteenth century, Dickens and Balzac could project their characters in rounded, rather than flat, dimensions, populating their scenes with human figures instead of with symbols. To the modern writer

this would be too frightening. The world seems so huge and so full of terror that it becomes necessary to reduce it to a model or a toy; to concede too much reality to a character unlike oneself might result in a diminishing of self, and this alarms people—not only novelists but also evangelists and corporation presidents. Thus the protagonists of both fiction and the higher forms of corporate advertisement resemble the authors of the play within the play, pitted against gigantic grotesques, no more believable than the balloons and floats dragged into the Rose Bowl on New Year's Day.

Rather than being ashamed of their ignorance, the literary guilds take a perverse and willful pride in what they regard as their spiritual cleanliness. When pressed for further explanations on this point they rely on the familiar mythologies of the romantic artist warring with the Philistines. This is mostly nonsense, but it provides a convenient excuse and allows both writer and reader to maintain the belief in their mutual and perpetual innocence. If they remain ignorant of the evils abroad in the world (choosing to see them as symbols and abstractions instead of as specific cruelties inflicted on specific individuals for specific reasons), so also they can disclaim any responsibility for the casualty lists. None of it is their fault. The guests of the management complain about the accommodations, the service, and the dance music, and in a society that doesn't want to look under the rock of its motives, the complaints go by the name of social criticism.

As the guests feel themselves increasingly superfluous, their complaints become increasingly strident, and, in the absence of anything better to do, they concentrate their attention on the debased romantic notion of the literary personage as celebrity. As recently as the early twentieth century an author's life, no matter how bizarre, was not the stuff of gossip. The literary man, still living in the country of which he was a citizen, had it in mind to become a substantial member of society and, if necessary, to carry forward the affairs of the state. Huysmans was employed as a police official, Trollope as a postal inspector. But who can imagine

John Gardner as a civil servant, or Thomas Pynchon conducting an embassy to the Afghans? The modern author has become the most extravagant of his own characters, the persona most self-consciously and lovingly conceived. Truman Capote gained more stature by virtue of publicly describing his love affairs than he does by the private act of writing books: Norman Mailer stabs his wife and enhances his reputation as an author of sensitivity; Gore Vidal loses an election for the U.S. Congress and remarks that he might have become President of the United States if it were not for "this fag thing." Lesser figures acquire luster by parading naked in the streets, wandering in India, or writing reviews of the sexual performance of their dead or famous paramours. The author who would be king achieves expression in his life rather than in his art; each new book becomes a further dramatization in the theater of self.

The emphasis on celebrity results in a cultural postponement of adulthood that corresponds to the biological postponement of death. Writers flattered for their celebrity receive the praise bestowed on children. The critics comfort them with effusive adjectives in the same way and for many of the same reasons that parents admire the daubs on the walls of a nursery school art exhibit. They praise the talent and intent rather than the accomplished task, and this results in the euphoric infantilization of the New York literary salons. For the time being, at least, the gifted children can play the games of let's-pretend and vent their rage on the conspiracy of grownups that makes all those dangerous mistakes with foreign policy and nuclear energy. Sooner or later even the fourth-grade pupils discover, much to their wonder and surprise, that they have got as far as the seventh grade and that summer vacations don't last forever. If the political and economic structures of the United States continue at their present rate of dissolution, I expect that the country might develop an audience for literature; increasingly large numbers of people might find themselves in need, if not of answers, then at least of consolation.

(This is the second of three articles on American letters.)

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JERRY BROWN: NOTHING TO EVERYONE

the politics of opportunity

by T. D. Allman

AT THE Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles, a group called "Californians for Brown" was paying \$750 a head to dine in the governor's company. When Jerry Brown was introduced not as a candidate for President, not even as the next President, but simply as "the president of the United States," he smiled; but unlike everyone else in the room, he did not laugh.

To a thousand of the richest and most powerful people in California—which is to say, on the planet—he spoke of seeing the visions of William Blake realized in the photographs sent back from Jupiter. My dinner companions included the treasurer of a large unions corporation and the director of a government agency with 6,000 employees. The governor counseled us to despoil the atmosphere less and to value austerity in our personal lives more. He spoke of brown-skinned migrants fusing new cultures in Los Angeles and of technologists building cathedrals in the sky.

Some might call his approach "flaky" or "weird," the governor conceded. But he argued strongly that in him

and in California this does not amount to decadence, but instead bespeaks "the seeds of future greatness." Do outsiders make fun of California? Do skeptics deride Brown as an opportunist?

"That's the price," Jerry Brown told the diners, "that California pays for being the place the rest of the country would like to be, and will be in the future." His gesture encompassed the Century Plaza Hotel: here, he said, is the place where one sees "the meeting of the outer with the inner universe." It is this, he concluded, that "makes our state the beacon of all the people on the planet."

The address, which had begun to thunderous applause, concluded in a hush. Then the room went black. I had assumed that Jerry Brown would be the evening's main event, but he was only the warm-up. The Californians for Brown were cheering. On stage was the child actress who plays the title role in *Annie*, together with her dog. The blond curly wig she wore had been contrived to match his fur. And if there was some humorous, self-deprecating irony in all this—in the orphan adopted by Daddy Warbucks as the

pièce de résistance of a \$750-a-plate dinner for Jerry Brown, amateur of Zen and prophet of the new era of limits—it seemed unintended. "Tomorrow," the child sang, "tomorrow."

Money and power are the great stratifiers in Southern California, but parking problems and traffic jams are the great democratizers. Political ladies in diamonds and waiters from Watts know only so many cars can be disgorged from an underground garage in so many minutes: they grow frank and philosophical as they wait at the curb. "Loved the dog," a woman confided, hugging her furs about her, to no one in particular. "Once they made a dog just like that emperor of Rome," offered the busboy who had cleared away her filet mignon. And further down one could see Pat Brown and Bernice Brown, the governor's parents, rapt in conversation with Lew Wasserman, the most successful backer in California politics, thus arguably one of the most powerful men in the world. "I think this gentleman from the press needs a few words from you," Jerry Brown's father told Wasserman, and after a moment the chairman of the Music Corporation of America drew me aside.

"We held this dinner to pay off a few of Jerry's debts from the last gubernatorial campaign," Wasserman said, not caring who heard. "I'll be for Carter in '80." I mentioned the fusion of new cultures, Blakeian visions, and Jovian clouds. Could he envision himself, under any circumstances, favoring Jerry Brown for the White House? "I can't imagine it," Wasserman replied. "Never." And he stepped into his car, which merged into a tumult of Audis, Mercedes, Seattles. The cars at first clung together. Then they dispersed, and in every direction they



Paul Degen

T. D. Allman is a contributing editor of Harper's and East Coast editor of Pacific News Service.

sped, the city of Los Angeles glistened, like broken glass on a freeway.

I SPENT two and a half months in California, much of it trying to divine the conundrum of Jerry Brown, listening to people who had known him since his youth. Like Elizabeth Gatov, formerly the Treasurer of the United States. June Degnan, a member of the Democratic National Committee, and Don Bradley, who helped run Pat Brown's campaigns. There were politicians who grappled with Brown, like Leo McCarthy, Howard Berman, and Maxine Waters, the Democratic leaders of the state assembly; and those Brown, as governor, had entrusted with power, like Rose Bird, the chief justice, Gray Davis, his chief of staff, and Robert Gnaizda, formerly a close aide who now practices public-advocacy law. There were those who have denounced Brown in print, like his former employment director, J. D. Lorenz, and those who were surprisingly unvindictive in private, like Jesse Unruh, who is now state treasurer. I listened to those who analyzed Brown's policies, like Jonathan Lewis, a tax-reform advocate—and to those who studied his politics, like Mervin Field, the opinion analyst. I talked to taxi drivers, bartenders, and people on buses; those who lived lavishly in Beverly Hills, and with fewer amenities in San Quentin prison; waiters who had served Jerry Brown dinner, women who had had dates with him, voters who had shaken his hand.

Whether people detested Brown or attended gala dinners in his honor, whether they knew him personally or had seen him only on television, the Californians with whom I spoke generally reacted as Wasserman had when I asked about Jerry Brown and the Presidency. A person who had known Brown much of his life, and said he liked him, smiled and answered: "The Presidency? I would do what I could to stop him." One of Brown's acquaintances from the Zen Center in San Francisco suggested he had no karma. César Chavez, when I met him, refused to say anything at all—and then a few weeks later denounced Brown publicly. I was surprised to hear people who had worked with Brown as governor repeatedly call him "dangerous." One of California's

most distinguished jurists was of the opinion that the Bill of Rights would not be safe in his hands, and a veteran of many a dinner-table seminar with the governor said: "He won't blow up the world to spite the Russians. Jerry will do it because it seems like an intriguing idea at the time. A capacity to be intrigued by ideas," he added, "must never be mistaken for a capacity to be committed to principles."

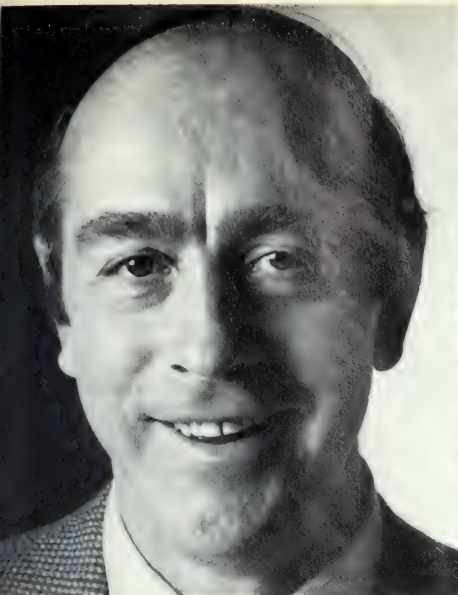
In truth, I encountered deep enthusiasm for Brown only twice, both times expressed by proprietors of restaurants that the governor had made famous by his patronage. His aides were loyal, but not even all of them had much enthusiasm for arguing that it was in the nation's best interests that Brown move into the White House.

I must say that Brown did not excite hatred either. These conversations were completely different in tone from discussions about Nixon during Watergate, or about Lyndon Johnson during the Indochina war. Brown meditates on the infinite cosmos and proposes a balanced budget here on earth; professes austerity and takes vacations in Africa; warns the disadvantaged to expect less of government in a new era of limits, and hungers to achieve the highest, most powerful political office on earth. And Californians respond to these contradictions not with anger but with indifference.

One member of his cabinet described the governor as "the hole in the doughnut. You can't put your finger on him, but he is always there." When I discussed tax reform with Jonathan Lewis, he said: "Most politicians get elected by being all things to all people. Jerry survives by being nothing to everyone." Advocates of equal education, of efforts to fight structural unemployment and to rationalize the state's finances, all gave similar accounts: they no longer pay attention to what Brown says, because it bears so little relationship to what he does. For years Brown has lectured the state on the need to use energy less and to reduce pollution. Yet when there was a public outcry when the state government established a car-pool lane on the Santa Monica Freeway, Brown quickly ordered it eliminated. The governor and the people of California have struck a deal: He can be the prophet of the new epoch of the 1980s, so long as he leaves them alone.

Midway through my visit, The California Poll, an independent, non-partisan institute supported by California publications and universities published some interesting survey. Only 21 percent of California Democrats said they would vote for Brown for President if he ran in his own home-state primary. Only 18 percent supported President Carter. On trips East, Governor Brown had suggested that the causes he espoused were surging out of the West to determine the national future in the 1980s, that liberal politicians who clung to the notion that big government could solve big problems were destined to be swept away. But the same poll showed Sen. Edward Kennedy—in spite of his liberalism, his opposition to the revolt, his total rejection of a constitutional convention; in spite of his Eastern Establishment connections and the lingering taint of the Chappaquiddick cover-up—beating Brown by more than two to one in California itself. In a three-way contest Kennedy was the Presidential favorite of more Californians—53 percent—than Brown and Carter combined. In a direct Brown-Kennedy contest, the poll indicated, Kennedy would defeat the governor of California in a California Presidential primary by a margin almost as big as he habitually wins in Massachusetts, 62 percent to 31 percent. A companion poll indicated that Brown's constitutional convention was opposed 40 percent to 36 percent, with 24 percent undecided.

By far the most revealing result came when Jerry Brown confronted Jimmy Carter head on in a California Presidential primary. It was almost a dead heat: 46 percent for Brown, after so much exposure here of his character and policies; 43 percent for Carter; 11 percent with "no preference" if the choice came down to that. Why did Brown's Presidential ambitions arouse so little enthusiasm in California? Another survey by The California Poll revealed that 45 percent of all Californians believe Brown "hasn't really accomplished anything important as governor," and that 46 percent are convinced both that "Jerry Brown isn't providing public leadership of the kind needed to get things done" and that he "does not work well with the legislature in getting necessary laws and programs passed." The poll discovered



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"that two-thirds of the public do not countenance an active drive for the Presidency by Brown."

IT TAKES LESS TIME for a lobbyist, politician, or journalist to fly from Los Angeles to the state capitol at Sacramento than an East Los Angeles housemaid needs to travel by bus to Palos Verdes or Beverly Hills. Five years after Governor Brown first announced that Californians must conserve more and expect less and look toward to their souls, not outward to increased consumption, to fulfill themselves, the state still works superbly for the advantage of those who spend lavishly today, and leave balancing their books for tomorrow.

The lesson California has to teach the nation, Brown suggested when we spoke, is that prosperity cannot be built on debt, the future on borrowed money. California itself suggests an opposite lesson. With Brown as governor, California has run up the biggest foreign balance-of-trade deficit of any state in the Union. It was less than \$1.3 million when he took office in 1975. After four years of Brown's lectures on limits, it amounted to no less than \$6.6 billion last year. Yet this tidal wave of red ink was far less important than the fact that, over the same period, California's total foreign trade had soared from about \$22 billion a year to more than \$36.4 billion. With the state emerging as a major trading partner of the vast Pacific rim, California's cities are full of new skyscrapers, its factories full of new jobs. Wealthy Japanese crowd restaurants in San Francisco: Chinese investors have discovered Oakland. Healthy, well-dressed, affluent people are driving cars, riding airplanes, and using their credit cards to rent speedboats at Marina del Rey.

The only principled Californians, in the terms of Brown's theology, are those obliged by circumstance to practice what Jerry Brown preaches. They are old and white and frail, or black youths with vacant eyes, or Chicano women wearing lunch-counter uniforms—those other Californians who spend only what they have, and consume only what they can afford, and who must wait forever in the sunshine at bus stops while the rest of the state speeds by.

"The important thing about a bal-

anced budget," Brown told me when we met in his vast air-conditioned office in the capitol, "is that if people don't really want programs they won't get them." I inquired about California's closed schools, its demoralized community colleges, its growing illiteracy, its unemployed minority youth. "Does spending all that money on schools really help?" Brown wondered, and handed me an article by Milton Friedman on the chimera of public education. What about the lost, the crazed, the drug addicts, those human casualties with which every society must cope? The governor gave me the transcript of his discussion with Dr. Thomas Szasz on "the myth of mental illness." Wasn't Brown's "balanced budget"—like Nixon's "law and order" and Carter's "ethnic purity"—really just code words? Under the guise of a new politics, new era, and new decade, wasn't Jerry Brown just pandering to selfishness, trying to exploit the "Me Generation" the way others had the "silent majority"? I was counseled by Bill Press, Brown's chief urban planner, to study a book the governor had urged all his closest advisers to read. It revealed, I was told, the perils of too much social, economic, and human presumption. It was called *The Faustian Delusion*.

FOR THE NEXT FORTNIGHT or so, I tried to keep track of Jerry Brown's displacements. He flew to the East Coast and back three times, for a total of about 18,000 miles, to warn against the politics of waste. One Sunday he flew to New Mexico for the day. He visited his country home at San Juan Ridge in Northern California, and flew countless times between Sacramento and his Southern California home in an affluent district of Los Angeles. He attended political meetings in San Mateo County, San Diego, the Central Valley, and a dozen other places in California, and then he left on a 22,000-mile, ten-day vacation to New York, Liberia, Nigeria, Kenya, Tanzania, and Europe with several close friends, including the singer Linda Ronstadt. Others might not recognize that the attempt to teach a ghetto teenager to read is Faustian presumption, or realize that the mind-blurred, elderly, homeless drunks shambling past the governor's

office in Sacramento each night are illusions, but as I commuted among San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Sacramento, mimicking the governor's own perpetual motions in a small way, was easy to understand Brown's reasoning. While others are blinded by getting too close to things, it is his destiny to perceive the verities of the future from the windows of airplane. Gazing down from such heights, he is elating ceaselessly at such speeds, doing he not best perceive people and their problems as ideas, see political leadership as the synthesis of concepts rather than accomplishments, understand California, America, the cosmos—life itself—as metaphor?

Sacramento is like all artificial, asymmetrically located capitals; it is Brazilia without modern architecture, Washington without blacks, Canberra. Sacramento is an Aleph—that is, not a place where power converges, but a point where images do. From Friday afternoon to Monday morning the capitol and the nearby mall are as empty as Wall Street on a bank holiday. Even on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday Sacramento is where the most important people of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Orange County, San Diego, the Valley, of the whole state converge with PSA flight schedules in their pockets. In elevators and hotel suites, in antechambers and on television, over steaks at Frank Fats and drinks at the Ponderosa Hotel, they bicker, orate, cope with scheduling conflicts, maneuver, and deal. Then they fly away, back to the realities they have sent them here.

The only real deadline in the seat of the government of California is the last flight out of town, and as I watched Sacramento empty out one evening, occurred to me that if one constantly looked down on California as a kaleidoscope, perceived politics as metaphor, and interpreted government as a linguistic game, then one could appreciate that Jerry Brown, in terms of California, is not the inner-directed loner some describe him as, but a one-man coalition. Like Tammany Hall or Cook County organization, he is best understood not for what he is but what he combines; not as a politician means, but as an end unto himself. Old style political machines were built of people, ballot boxes, and money. Brown is a coalition of California resonances

he has the intellectual instincts of a Marin County ecotopian, yet he shares the Orange County developer's loathing of government "waste"—that is, programs that subsidize people rather than profit. He hates pollution in Humboldt County and loves Linda Ronstadt in the entertainment capital of the world. He combines Earl Warren's capacity to transcend party, Richard Nixon's genius for hitching himself to cause, Ronald Reagan's photogeneity, and his own father's finesse for the political deal. When we spoke privately, for example, he seemed to sense my own interests, and argued strongly for a common market linking America, Canada, and Mexico. But a few days later, in South San Francisco, he was among people whose whole lives seemed threatened by Mexican workers, Japanese imports, Arab oil. Foreigners, he told them, had to be stopped from taking away American factories and jobs, from buying up American land.

If many Californians express apathy or contempt for the governor, they have also consented to elect him. They do so because Brown is entirely representative of the state he governs. Affluent California, and much of the rest of America in the 1970s, is populated by enlightened eighteenth-century aristocrats who want the Rights of Man, and to keep their estates, too.

In such societies, the politician is expected to create an impression of enlightened progress without tampering with the status quo. In Los Angeles, for example, I had a long discussion with a solar-energy activist. He emphasized the perils of the nuclear reactor, the folly of dependence on imported oil. By chance I asked his position on the car-pool lane on the Santa Monica Freeway. He denounced it as bureaucratic tyranny, and a violation of his civil liberties.

In San Francisco the gay activists were strong for human rights, and had voted for Proposition 13, too; they tend to own houses, and have no children to send to school. Such people like to believe the leaders they elect are brave and principled, but punish them when they act accordingly. It is political suicide, of course, really to cross the developers, the big industries, the growers; to make people use car-pool lanes; to urge one can fly to Tokyo, and hide the Japanese for killing the whale; or when a farmworker is killed, fly down to the Imperial Valley to attend his funeral;

and drive around in a Plymouth in the name of austerity, while running up a \$1 million reelection debt.

NONE OF THESE contradictions is peculiar to Brown, or unique to California, or new.

In fact, the Jerry Brown era in California in the 1970s is an imitation of the John Lindsay era in New York City a decade ago. In both cases, beneath the general fascination with a beguiling politician lies an identical problem: an incompetence to deal with money, and a readiness simply to trade in images.

In New York, of course, the fiscal crisis had been brought on by a lack of money. California politics were shaken to the foundation by Proposition 13 because there was too much money. But the essential dilemma in both cases was that the politician in question realized he could not at once pursue the Presidency and address the responsibilities of the office he already held. Lindsay, the maverick Republican, had to campaign for President as though free-spending liberalism had triumphed in New York City; he could not admit it was steadily going broke. Before Proposition 13, Brown, the maverick Democrat, had to campaign for President as though his "era of limits" had triumphed in California; he could not admit, so far as the torrent of state revenues pouring in was concerned, that there were hardly any limits at all. Indeed, as the years passed, Jerry Brown became more and more like the Sorcerer's Apprentice. The louder he announced the "era of limits," the bigger the California state surplus grew. It was \$500 million in early 1975, when Brown took office, \$2.7 billion just two years later. It had climbed—unmanaged, ignored, and unused—to nearly \$6 billion by the time the voters ransacked the state treasury. A different kind of politician might have seen in this mountain of money a unique chance to reform society with vast new social programs, and given it all away; or if he subscribed to another philosophy, he might have felt it his duty to return it to the taxpayers. Brown, for his part, perceived in this staggering fiscal imbalance a different opportunity. As the 1980 Presidential season approached, he would let the surplus stealthily grow. Then he would pre-

sent himself as the Democrat who had out-Reaganned Reagan in turning government indebtedness around. He would run for President not as having balanced the budget—the California budget remains massively imbalanced, on the side of surplus, even today—but as the politician who had proved that bureaucracy could make a profit. So through 1976 and 1977, Brown treated the California surplus the way Lindsay had handled the New York debt, not as something real that could feed people, or make them hungry, but as a concept, an image, a political abstraction that, for political reasons, had to be suppressed. Before the 1978 California tax revolt, one heard the same things one earlier had heard about the New York deficit before the 1975 fiscal crisis broke: The surplus was overstated; it was a temporary aberration; it could be managed; it hardly existed at all. But the voters of California knew better. They struck first.

Of course once Proposition 13 was passed, Californians were denounced as Hooverites and right-wing flat-earthers, just as during the fiscal crisis New Yorkers were condemned as welfare chiselers and socialist knaves. The larger lesson was ignored. It was that a politics of illusion cannot make reality go away; it only ensures that power migrates someplace else. If an elected governor would not deal with the surplus, then self-appointed manipulators for special interests like Howard Jarvis would. Proposition 13 no more disposed of California's surplus than the New York "bail-out" disposed of New York's debts. Instead, in the guise of a tax revolt, there was a political revolution. Just as the fiscal crisis in New York transferred political control from elected officials and local government to the banks, the Municipal Assistance Corporation, and committee staffers in Washington, so Proposition 13 stripped power from city hall, the school boards, the elected officials. The real winners were the California state bureaucracy, which now holds the local purse strings, and the big corporate property owners, who will profit from the tax cut.

As I wandered the corridors of the capitol in Sacramento, the legislators and state administrators and the governor's aides all spoke like people who had lost the capacity to determine events, and properly so. The most powerful man in the state is not the gov-

ernor, on those occasions when he is at home; or the Republican lieutenant governor, Mike Curb, a thirty-four-year-old recording executive whose company produced "You Light Up My Life"; nor is it Leo McCarthy, the speaker of the assembly. It is Paul Gann, co-author of Proposition 13, and the proponent of another California constitutional amendment, to be proposed to the voters in 1980. Where Proposition 13 merely reduces property taxes and effectively takes away from state government the power to raise them again, the new Gann proposal would limit government spending itself. The state government would be denied the power to increase spending even if it had the money. Most of the officials I met consider Gann's "Spirit of 13" initiative unwise, even wicked, and a *fait accompli*. Gone is the sense that elected leaders can lead, or even have the power to try.

To the extent he is remembered as a governor of California, rather than as a media figure or Presidential candidate, it seems likely Brown will be recalled as the seer who did not see Proposition 13 coming, as the politician who prophesied greatness for the 1980s while embodying the 1970s paralysis of leadership here and now. "Everywhere Pat goes in California," said June Degnan, who has known both Browns for years, "he gets standing ovations, the kind his son never does. It's as though people miss the days when politicians were leaders, and believed government mattered."

THE WEEK Jerry Brown left on safari, a move to outlaw de-segregation-by-busing in California was approaching a climax; a nuclear reactor, a twin of the one in Pennsylvania, was a subject of great concern; Brown had left dozens of judgeships vacant for more than a year. It was not that the governor favored de facto segregation or, conversely, that he supported busing, an aide explained, just that it was an issue the governor could not profitably address at this time. As for the fear of a nuclear melt-down, the governor had asked that the plant be closed. Now it was for others to decide. He did appoint more than twenty judges just before he left, lest the lieutenant governor do it while he was away. "Jerry

can make love to Linda on top of an elephant, so long as he leaves me alone," a fellow passenger on a San Francisco trolley answered, when I asked him about the Africa trip.

If many people are apathetic about Brown and yet content to have him governor, it is because they do not care whether government matters and are satisfied that, under him, it does not.

Observe, for example, Brown's performance on the death penalty. In California, as elsewhere, capital punishment is like busing, a divisive, emotional issue, and leaders lead at their peril. Jerry Brown's position was unequivocal and well known. Back in the 1960s he had strongly, publicly protested executions of convicted murderers in the state of California. Indeed, while his father was governor, Jerry Brown had fought against the Caryl Chessman execution with such fervor that many—including Pat Brown himself—believed the son's position had cost his father reelection in 1966, when Ronald Reagan had defeated him by making law and order a major theme of his campaign. Now it was Jerry's turn as governor. The legislature was moving to restore the death penalty. Would Jerry Brown choose political expediency and accept the measure, or pay the political price of his convictions and veto it? The political problem was that expedience might hurt him politically even more than following his conscience would. Not only would Jerry Brown be perceived widely as abandoning a moral position for lack of political courage, he would be accused of having been all too willing to endanger his father's political career while refusing to take any such chances with his own. It seemed a situation in which, whatever he did, Jerry Brown was sure to lose.

Brown vetoed the death penalty legislation, and it was then and only then, many people told me, that his real mastery began to show. Could the legislature muster the necessary two-thirds majority to override his veto? It seemed unlikely, until Governor Brown announced publicly that capital punishment was far too important a moral issue for politics to play a role. He had followed his conscience. Now it was up to the legislators, without political interference, to vote their consciences, too. Privately, the word went down the governor's chain of command: Not a

single assemblyman or state senator was to be lobbied, not a single action taken in support of the governor's course. In the end the death penalty was enacted, by exactly the necessary two-thirds vote. "We could have done it one of Brown's former aides told me. "I personally knew at least two assemblymen who were waiting for the call. All Jerry had to do was pick up the telephone, but he refused. It was then I realized what Brown's politics were all about, and knew I had to go."

A person who still works for Governor Brown told the identical story but he derived quite a different lesson from it. "Jerry's a genius," he told me. "He constantly turns political disaster into opportunities smaller politicians can't even sense." As a result of the death-penalty maneuver, he pointed out, Brown had metamorphosed certain defeat into a multidimensional political success. He had proven to the reformers that he stands by his principles while avoiding the political complications of flaunting his convictions in the face of public opinion. Friends of his father could not accuse him of disloyalty, nor the legislature criticize him for meddling in its affairs. And the law-and-order people had their death penalty, too. "It was the perfect political solution," he said. "It showed Jerry doing what he does best."

IN PERSON Governor Brown seemed older and smaller than he does on television. Contrary to what I had been led to expect, he was cordial and direct. Indeed, many of his answers lasted longer than his first, seven-minute inaugural address.

I asked about his proposal for a constitutional convention. In Washington and New York, when it was reported Brown wanted a convention, many liberals were outraged; many conservatives took heart. Some editorial writers and jurists started discussing the thing as if it would actually take place. In California, as in the East, the proposal divided people, too, but in a different way. Some were upset because Brown did not really mean it, or so they believed. Others were not upset, for the very same reason.

When I asked Brown himself, he described his support for a constitutional convention, using the same calculus that had informed his sta-

'Who Should Suffer from Future Energy Shortages?'

In a recent poll, Americans supported sharing energy shortages among all groups of consumers:

"Is it your feeling that any cutbacks that come in the use of energy by the American public should be about equally divided between all groups of Americans or is it your feeling that some groups of the American consuming public should have to cut back a good deal more or less than most people?"

Divided equally	65%
Not divided equally	28%
Don't know	7%

Source: March 1979 national probability sample, by telephone, of 1,000 adults. Conducted for Union Carbide by Roger Seasonwein Associates, Inc.

A majority said 'All of Us.'

A majority of Americans believe that all groups in our society should share the burdens of any future energy shortages about equally. They reject the idea that some groups ought to be cut back more, or less, than others. Apparently, Americans have not lost their sense of fairness and shared sacrifice at a time when, as was shown in another Seasonwein poll, 50 percent felt that in the next few months we still be facing energy shortages.

While these questions were part of a survey of American attitudes on energy conservation, they shed light on the related questions of what the public feels is fair in dealing with energy shortages. And in developing public policies for allocating energy in a future shortage, our leaders will have to consider public attitudes as well as such economic realities as the importance of energy resources used as raw materials, rather than fuel.

Energy as a building block.

Most Americans think of energy as a fuel; as a source of heat, light or motion at home and on the job. But energy materials such as oil and gas are also used by companies like Union Carbide as raw materials—feedstocks—for which there are now no ready substitutes.

- Petroleum and natural gas provide the basic building blocks for products as diverse as fertilizers, chemicals, plastics, medicines and fabrics.
- In 1976, over 6 million American jobs depended on petroleum and gas feedstocks.
- The value of the products made directly from these feedstocks was \$20.3 billion higher, in 1976, than the value of the feedstocks themselves.
- The petrochemical industry is one of the few U.S. industries to maintain a favorable balance of trade; in 1976 it amounted to \$4.1 billion.

Feedstocks—a small but vital percentage.

Only a small part of America's enormous use of energy resources goes for feedstocks, but that small percentage is vital.

- The oil and gas used for feedstocks in 1976 equaled just 4.1 percent of America's total oil and gas consumption.
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Where Union Carbide stands on energy supplies.

Union Carbide now uses about \$2 billion worth of energy resources for fuel, power and raw materials per year, and we have a proven commitment to conserving energy resources and using them wisely. By the end of 1978, we'd reduced our energy use per pound of product by more than 15 percent compared to 1972. And we have recently announced new conservation goals that would bring our 1985 energy use level down an additional 15 percent, compared to 1972.

Union Carbide supports public policies, including the use of market prices, that would encourage domestic energy production and conservation. We support policies for dealing with shortages that would share the burden equitably and that would recognize that petroleum and natural gas feedstocks are irreplaceable and vital to our society.

This advertisement is part of a continuing series on public opinions and national concerns. For more information, write for your complimentary copy of "Public Attitudes on Energy Conservation," a report of the nationwide survey.

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against capital punishment. "I will have succeeded in my objective precisely if there is no constitutional convention," he said. "The important thing is that the question has been raised, and people have started to think." But what if it were held? "It should be limited to the single function of adopting an amendment to balance the federal budget," he answered. I was confused. He repeatedly had said a whole new agenda was needed for the nation, that it was time for the politicians to cede power to the people. Why not have a constitutional convention to do that? "Oh-no," he replied, "that's not what we want." On his trips across the country, Brown had spoken as though his objective were to make every dime in taxes that came in equal every ten cents in government spending that went out, so I was intrigued when neither he nor his aides could give me any studies on what it all would mean. If the federal budget were balanced, would taxes have to be raised, or the Pentagon budget cut? Were we to do away with Social Security? How many government employees would have to be laid off? "I'm trying to get the message across that we can't go on mortgaging the future," the governor replied.

Most of Governor Brown's conversation was not taken up with such affairs as the Constitution and the balanced budget, or the diminishing returns of teaching people to read and write. Instead he dwelt on the catholicity of his intellectual tastes. At one point, Brown showed me two books he was reading: Carl Sagan's *The Cosmic Connection*, and *Muddling Toward Frugality*, by Warren Johnson. "That's the real challenge of the 1980s," he said. "How do we synthesize the two?" Journalists have to listen to so many unoriginal people, it was hard not to be grateful. Jerry Brown has an interesting collection of ideas the way Nelson Rockefeller had an interesting collection of abstract art. He aspires to personify the future the way others want to embody avant-garde aesthetic taste. His frugality is famous, but it seemed to me as I listened to him that he is a consumer of a different sort: intriguing ideas are his microwave ovens, fascinating little books his mobile homes. He spoke of communing with the rhythms of the cosmos, yet Jerry Brown is doomed, like all successful politicians, to dance to whatever tune the

present cares to play. If the polls show declining faith in education or in equal opportunity or in basic social services, then he will denounce these public works. If he cannot head off Proposition 13 in California, then he will lead the tax revolt across the nation, because thither the Presidency lies. On the hidden costs of deficit spending he is brilliant; for the price of his own ambition he has no critique.

I remember Oliver Wendell Holmes's reaction to Franklin D. Roosevelt, but with Jerry Brown it is the reverse. He has a first-class intellect and a second-class temperament. He can calculate exceedingly fine, but he has no sense—in spite of Zen, and the years with the Jesuits—of how legitimacy depends on conviction, how politics runs on faith. And so when one raises matters of substance with Jerry Brown, he will dance to the tune of the present, taking positions that reflect the polls, reciting phrases one has heard from other politicians many times before. Brown, after all, is not much different from Jimmy Carter, or even Jerry Ford.

WE MET one more time, in Los Angeles, under circumstances so strange, so unique to California, that I report the encounter because I believe it composes a parable of Jerry Brown. In the office of Gray Davis, Brown's chief of staff, a framed poem hangs on the wall:

*I am the magical friend.
You can keep me as long as you
choose.
I am the magical friend.
I am impossible to lose.*

Do you know the feeling when you have been looking down, preoccupied, perhaps reading? You suddenly become aware that someone has been watching you, without your realizing it. You look up, suddenly startled.

We were driving, a friend and I, along one of those endless, neon-lit boulevards in west Los Angeles, looking for a Mexican restaurant. I had the glove-compartment light on, and was trying to navigate from a map. A car had been running beside us, in the next lane, for a number of blocks. Though traffic was not heavy, the neighboring car seemed deliberately to keep to that position—beside us, just a little ahead.

Suddenly I sensed it. I started, and looked up. A man in the neighboring car had been looking out at us for some time staring, studying us. It was the governor of California. There were other people in his car, a chauffeur, guard, an aide, but they were seated in the normal position, looking ahead. Only he was swiveled around, gazing half-sideways, half-backwards, at us while we all moved along at a speed of about fifty miles an hour, from a distance of less than ten feet.

Why had he swiveled around, and stared? Later I thought it was perhaps only that Brown is like some of those Hollywood stars, who cannot tolerate anonymity ever, who try to make eye contact with strangers, for the satisfaction of making them recognize in the flesh the faces they have seen so often on the screen.

But in that split second on the boulevard, I had an entirely different sensation. The relation of journalist to public person is always a very satisfying one for the journalist because it is always a one-way street. They have no right to secrets, we enjoy our privacy as a matter of law. All our inconsistencies, dishonesties, ambitions are private matters. Theirs are information the public has a right to know. For a second I sensed what it was like to be in his position, to be watched. Had Brown found some satisfaction in turning the tables, if only for a minute or two while riding in a moving car: in staring at the journalist without the journalist aware that he was being seen?

As soon as he saw me start with recognition, Brown waved. We exchanged gestures, and followed the governor's car around corners, down canyons, through the Hollywood night to his house. When we stopped, he got out, and came over. I rolled down the window. It was California: Where else can you interview a governor without getting out of a car? We talked for few minutes. Then he startled me again.

"When will I see you again?" he asked. And again I had the sense that the tables had been turned. Surely it was my function to ask the question, he was not to see, but to be seen. I was not sure he was anyone's magical friend at least of all his own. But I sensed in that person at that moment what he intended for the nation: to make himself impossible to lose.

LIFE ON THE CARD

Whim fulfillment in the land of plastic credit

by Jack Richardson

REMEMBER SEEING, it was in the late Fifties I believe, a comedy skit on television, the subject of which was the then-novel use of credit cards. A couple in a snobbish restaurant had just received their bill, and the man began counting out in cash what he owed. As he watched this process, the waiter, at first a study in detached hauteur, registered shock and horror. Surely, he said to the customer, there must be a more seemly way of discharging his obligation. American Express, Diners Club, Carte Blanche were all accepted by the establishment, so there was no need to inject this vulgar note into their little transaction. The customer, however, had no credit cards, and could do nothing but humbly ask that his Treasury notes be honored. The waiter, as if he fully grasped the Freudian link between money and excrement, shuddered, pinched the offending matter between thumb and forefinger, and, napkin to nose, went off muttering imprecations and insults.

What was a comic fantasy twenty years ago has now become an everyday act. It seems that only in the twilight world of the poor and the shady, the

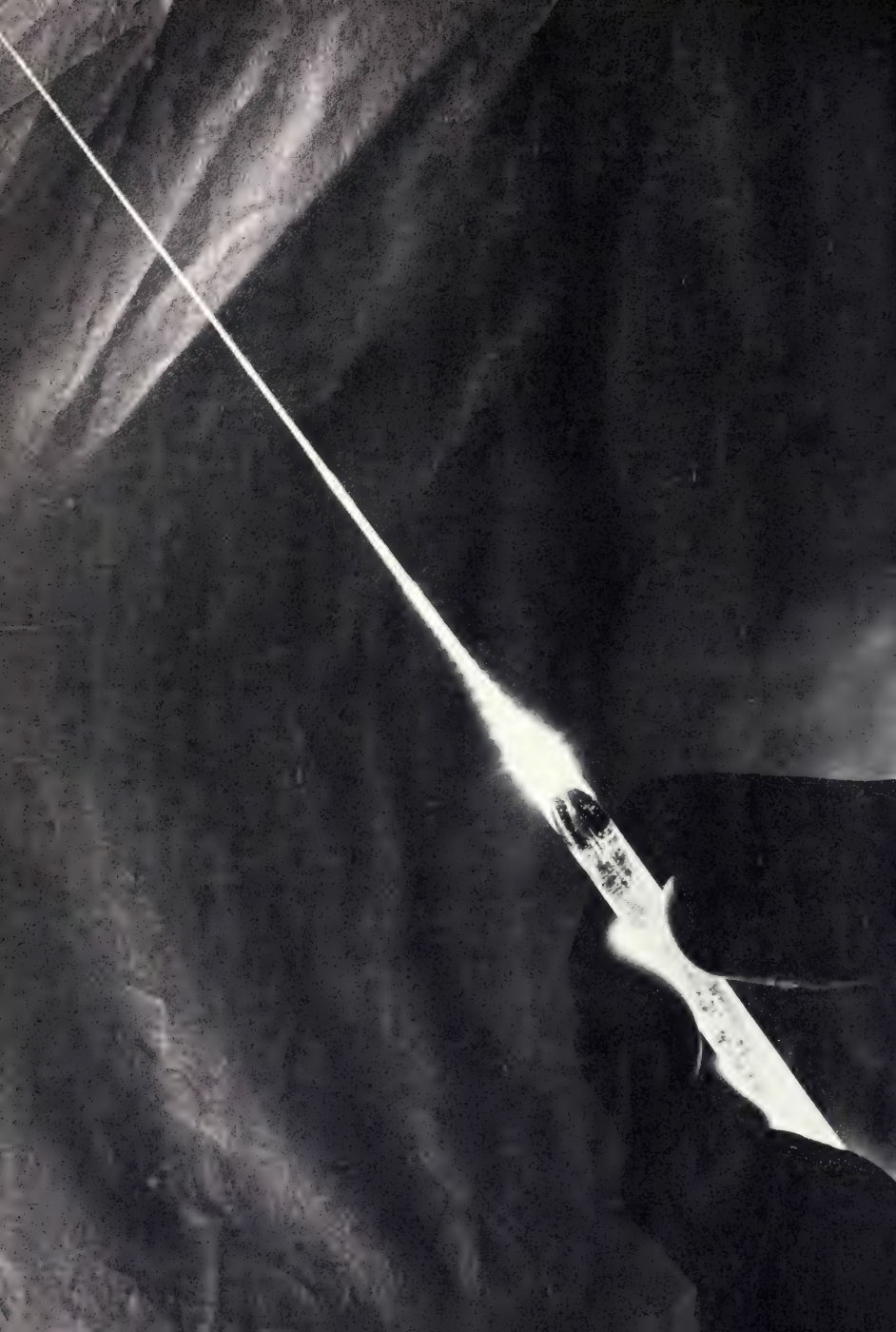
world of anonymous, sub-rosa finance, have the coins and notes of government issue kept up their traditional economic roles as a medium of exchange, a recognized standard of value, and a store of wealth. As one moves up in society—and not very far up—one comes to understand that ready money has acquired a suspicious and fugitive reputation, and that its use for anything except the most lowly purchase causes disquieting moments. The department store, the shop, the hotel, the restaurant—all those enterprises that conduct business with a large and, for the most part, unknown public have put themselves under the protection of a credit and exchange system administered by a few giant corporations. Their doors, windows, and advertisements display the emblems of these credit institutions. Like colorful, heraldic devices, the emblazements of American Express, Diners Club, Master Charge, Carte Blanche, and Visa festoon the great and small retail business, giving their imprimatur to a cashless commerce.

A person who has no badge to mark him a member of one of these clans of credit, who wishes to buy underwear,

books, plants, or pets as a freelance consumer, finds himself these days very much in the minority. He and his quaint method of buying are still tolerated, but when he counts out his three or four hundred dollars for a Sony or a pedigreed terrier, he feels himself curiously scanned by the salesman, as though he were offering to trade for the store's honest merchandise a pair of goats and a slightly used axe handle. All around him, he sees other shoppers buying gracefully, presenting light, easily carried little plaques and affixing signatures to bills and receipts with the nonchalance of an oil sheik signing a gambling marker. By the time he leaves the store, the cash payer has had it impressed on him again that he is out of step with society. Of course, he has not incurred any debt for the items he has purchased, but what does this matter when he feels that he is guilty of a lack of consumer sophistication? Why, after all, should he continue his old-fashioned habits, with all of their inconveniences,

Jack Richardson is a drama critic for Commentary and the author of Memoir of a Gambler, which Simon and Schuster will publish in the fall.





Why this one-of-a-kind invention didn't end up as the only one of its kind.

Every new invention needs another new invention—the one that can mass-produce it at an affordable cost.

For example, Bell Labs invented a process for making the glass rods from which hair-thin fibers used in lightwave communications can be drawn. The fibers have far greater capacity than conventional copper wires, so they'll help keep costs down. In fact, they've been carrying voice, data, and video signals under city streets for about two years in a Bell System demonstration.

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That's where Western Electric's Engineering Research Center comes in.

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The Center is devoted exclusively to manufacturing research.

Here, a highly trained team of scientists and engineers probe fundamental questions about materials and processes. They provide Western Electric factories with pre-tested,



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But how do you control a "thread" of glass being spun at rates up to 15 feet per second?

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The system works so well that in all the miles of fiber produced by Western Electric, the diameter varies by no more than 30-millionths of an inch.

The Key to the Future

In the Bell System, technology is the key to keeping costs down. It is the key to constantly improving your phone service.

And Western Electric's Engineering Research Center is an essential link between the ideas of the laboratory and the realities of the factory.

So your Bell Telephone Company can make the best one-of-a-kind inventions a part of your phone service.

Keeping your communications system the best in the world.



Western Electric

When the result is discomfort and embarrassment? Why should he let it be thought of him that he is barred, by income or character, from the sacred orders of credit? Why should he pay for hotel rooms in advance because he lacks the accepted *bona fides* of a credit card? How long will it be before restaurants follow suit, and demand from the unsponsored customer a healthy down payment before serving him?

THUS HARRIED by the world of commerce, our cash payer soon takes home one of the many applications for credit that are artfully placed in his path every day. He swallows his sense of privacy, states his financial worth and habits, and awaits the ruling on his acceptability as a card-carrying consumer.

Assuming that he is no well-known Micawber, his application is most likely approved, and he finds himself welcomed into the happy, fluid world of credit buying. At first, he remains a little stodgy, using his card only on special occasions, still seeing in his mind dollars and cents being removed from his private store, and marking a degree of depletion past which he will not go. However, the economy in which he now moves deprecates such cautious behavior. An accredited consumer need not be limited by money on hand. As one has been freed from the limits of cash, so is one also liberated from the confines of a bank account. The slogans that urged him into a philosophy of credit now coax him into placing his calculations in the future. And they are not even grimly precise about that future; they exhort him to "buy now, pay later," not to "buy now, pay by 12:00 P.M., January 15." Of course, he knows there is a definite day of reckoning, but he knows also that the reckoning need not be a full one. A partial payment will keep his credit standing unblemished, and if this involves the mild chastisement of interest, it seems a reasonable expense for his new freedom. The debt he has permitted himself, even when slightly swollen by carrying charges, is well within the limits assigned him by his credit service. Their professional assessment of his ability to manage this burden should ease any misgivings of his own. If Visa or Master Charge is optimistic

about his character and financial future, why should he be any less confident? The foibles and caprices he knows he is subject to cannot be, after all, so serious if his function in society is deemed worth \$1,000 of trust every month.

With two credit cards circulating for every man, woman, and child resident in the United States, the total consumer debt as of the end of last December was about \$2 trillion, of which \$275 billion was owed on installment. Now all this is not necessarily bad. Indeed, one could argue that credit is one of the humane uses of capitalism, allowing its recipient to defer payment instead of pleasure. The economic being that Keynes found so pitiful, the "purposive" man for whom "jam is not jam unless it is a case of jam tomorrow and never jam today," is hardly to be preferred to the man who can understand life in terms of immediate enjoyments. And does not the credit-card system allow one to accumulate more enjoyments? Is it not a fine example of modern society's ability to provide the ordinary man with what once were the privileges of the few? Today, one need not be titled, famous, or rich to have the authority of one's name commercially honored, and this new courtesy is wrapped in the protective sheath of credit analysis, an actuarial process that protects the buyer from himself and the seller from misplaced confidence. No longer need the tradesman fear that the credit he extends in his need for patronage may lead to bankruptcy. Now, for a small fee, which he of course passes on to his customers, he may trust the world with perfect confidence, for his deals are struck not with the unpredictable Mr. Jones or the somewhat cagey Mr. Smith, but with a corporation. And just as governments tax their citizens for providing them with services that facilitate and guard the everyday conduct of their lives, so do these corporations, justly and fairly, extract a tithe for their protection and expansion of the general marketplace.

SO, THERE IS little doubt that the advantages of the world of credit are many. But there are, unfortunately, dark sides as well. In emancipating us from the boundaries of ready cash and the

prison of a too-purposive economic life, the credit-card company has created for itself an intimate role in our daily commerce. Unlike banks and loan companies, the card corporations deal with the relatively small and casual purchases of individuals. A man takes upon himself the mortgage of a home or a loan for his business is a much more cautious creature than the man who browses Bloomingdale's at luncheon. On the daily level of economic life, most of us are subject to whims and desires that arise spontaneously and have little to do with needs or sober reflection. However, a sudden urge to dine out, see a play, buy a jogging suit, once restrained by the accidents of the bank account, is cash on hand, or the stigma of debt, now uninhibited. Indeed, the advertisements of the card companies, and the businesses with which they are allied, persuade us that we are in some way culpable if we leave these impulses wishes unsatisfied. The father who sees his son looking lustfully at a miniature moped, the young man who finds his restaurant his girlfriend has chosen less insolent prices, are urged to remember that they have "clout," and that they can meet the unexpected expense with a calm, cavalier disdain. And also in the manner of the advertisements implying that these are needful expenses, for a father wants to disappoint a son, and only a fool drags a lady off to a cheaper restaurant.

Now the credit-card corporations do not exactly out to endorse a *carpe diem* philosophy. They may create a climate in which the impulsive rather than the purposive consumer is honored and catered to, but they do temper the extravagant moment with limiting limits of credit. Each customer is assigned a level of debt that, supposedly, has been statistically concluded to be manageable. However, since profits are determined to a great extent by interest charged on late payments, it is reasonable to assume that the card companies wish to establish standards of credit that are as generous as possible commensurate with a high probability of eventual payment. "Eventual" is here a key word, for the company is not much interested in speedy reimbursement as it is in long-term credit relationships in which forbearance of debt is most rewarding. A cynic might even see, in the standards these com-

porations set for spending, a method that attempts to ensure and perpetuate the obligations of their customers—a variorum of just the right size that keeps them forever jogging along the road of partial payment.

Thus these credit managers play a dangerous game with human nature. In the honorable search for maximum profits, they calculate the most delicate balance between desire and responsibility, and then force their conclusions in a wide section of society. Just how wide can be grasped by the billions in consumer debt reported by our economic surveys. Debt has become so much an accepted condition of our culture that we are hardly conscious anymore of the fact that most of the things and pleasures we acquire do not, strictly speaking, belong to us. The vague anxiety that occasionally is felt in the back of the mind as we accumulate our debts is lulled and assuaged by the system that produces it. We are lured on with easy-payment plans, and soothed by economic rationalizations that make debt seem almost an act of patriotism. The little square of plastic we carry with us is made to take in the aspect of a *carte d'identité*, until we begin to believe that it is really ourselves who are defined and trusted by its acceptance.

BUT WHAT IF the credit managers are wrong in their estimate of our tolerance for debt? We know how in individual cases of recalcitrance they maintain the fiduciary order of their world. If a customer finds that he must postpone his proper payment because of unforeseen expenses, or if he begins to disrelish having to pay for half-forgotten pleasures, and rebels against the system that keeps him constantly in arrears, he is quickly made to understand the consequences of such capricious behavior. The full majesty and power of the credit world is pointed out to him in minutely polite form letters that make clear that the atmosphere of trust in which he has been consuming goods and services had nothing to do with him personally. Without the sponsorship of the corporation, he will be a man without financial character, commercially rejected, alone and helpless. He will face a general obloquy, for he will be marked foul not only by the

company of which he is a customer, but also by the agencies with which it shares an intelligence system of credit. As these letters of admonishment grow more and more waspish, the disobedient customer begins to feel as if he were threatened with a loss of citizenship, and he realizes that whereas before he submitted himself to the world of credit he was deemed only an eccentric, now, should he be exiled from that world, he would be taken for an outlaw.

This is undoubtedly a strong inducement to obedience, but it will work only as long as the customer is made to believe that he is an odd case, and that his dissatisfaction with the system is a result of personal flaws and individual incompetence. However, as inflation continues to rise, and more and more people chase their old standards of living to the limits of credit, he may discover that he is not alone after all in his feeling of being duped and manipulated. Around him he may find very decent people for whom "living off the card" and "putting it on plastic" now describe an economic addiction rather than an easy way of life. In disgruntled conversations with fellow malcontents, he may find a way to believe that, just as debt had come to seem respectable, so too might default achieve an honorable reputation. Indeed, if, as seems the case, society is drugged with credit, a unified movement to default may be a responsible and necessary cure.

When the credit manager's letters come again, they no longer seem so threatening. The customer has discovered that a great many other people are receiving them, and he has persuaded himself that to be dropped from the rolls of good standing is not such a dismal fate. Where the letters imply "pariah," he now permits himself to read "martyr."

Is this a description of aberrant thinking and twisted values? Perhaps. But as the tension of the individual's budget is increased, as he feels more and more that he is tickled and hustled into expense and then harassed when payment proves difficult, it is not unlikely that the time may be near when, in a spirit of either revolt or despair, he simply stops paying those debts that he now believes to be unjustly burdensome. And the first debts to be dismissed will be those the debtor feels were acquired in a fit of absence of

mind, the debts he believes he was talked into when he first allowed himself to be cozened by the credit card.

AN ECONOMIST, of course, would find all this highly improbable. He deals with something called "economic man," and this creature has a clear understanding of credit as nothing more than a cold function of expense and income. Economic man, on opening his bills, is never rudely shocked; he feels no regret, shame, or panic; an unbalanced budget does not lead him to drugs or drink. Economic man may go bankrupt; but he will never go crazy in the process.

The ordinary man is, unfortunately, not so neatly shaped. His economics are more volatile. He colors facts, permits arguments for his desires that have little to do with addition, and wishes simply to live beyond his means with a clear conscience. The credit card affects to permit this, and when he realizes it does not, he feels betrayed. And there are those of us, closer to mortal than to economic man, who think he might, after all, have a reasonable case.

It is, most likely, impossible to return to the old concrete world of cash. There may be, for all one knows, simply not enough bills and coins in the country to handle all the middle-range commerce that now lies within the credit card's domain. Still, there might be a week set aside every few months when cash becomes once more the only commonly accepted medium of exchange. True, it would be inconvenient, but it would provide a time of sobriety, an interim free from the delusions and beguiling abstractions of credit. It would also, I believe, act as a sort of safety valve for the economy, alerting consumers to the dangers in their spending habits, and permitting them an unclouded view of the decline of capital. Forced every now and then to gather, carry, and count, we would be made to remember that we are involved in the sad laws and limits of a materialistic world. Such direct, immediate accounting might restore a proper balance between our labor and our desires, and would definitely, as we left behind us piles of vulgar cash, reveal the obscene prices we now must pay for our pleasures and our needs. □

"13 YEARS AGO I BOUGHT THIS VOLVO BECAUSE IT WAS ADVERTISED AS THE 11 YEAR CAR."

—William Stiles, Bronx, New York



13 years ago, William Stiles, an expert in American Indian history and artifacts, discovered the treasure you see here: a 1966 Volvo.

He bought it because ads of the time said Volvos were so durable they lasted an average of 11 years in Sweden.

As Mr. Stiles recalls: "One ad said that a Volvo was so tough, you could 'Drive it like you hate it.' I did exactly that. In my field work I've driven this car 295,000 hard miles, much of it through former Indian territory. It's held up even better than promised. Driving it like I hated it made me love it."

Expressions of love are not uncommon among Volvo owners. In fact, 9 out of 10 people who have bought new Volvos are happy.

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REPUBLICAN VIRTUES

at odds with the cult of the nation

by Walter Karp

EVEN AS A SCHOOLBOY reciting the pledge of allegiance, I thought America an odd sort of place. It was not one country, apparently, but two. It did so in the flag oath. "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America," we chanted in unison, and then concluded triumphantly that it was "one nation indivisible, with liberty and justice for all." That was one America, the "nation," whose "alabaster cities gleam," we piped at other times, "undimmed by human tears." But the flag hanging limply in the corner represented something else as well. There was "the Republic for which it stands," an extra-added America, the "republic" whose nature and purport proved a puzzle too deep for the schoolboy mind to solve. Solve it, however, we must, because there are two distinct Americas, two separate objects of a patriot's devotion, two distinct foundations of two contrary codes of political virtue. One is the American nation, the other is the American republic. At every important juncture of our public life these two Americas conflict with each other.

On a famous occasion some years ago, the president of the United States secured an injunction against the *New York Times* ordering it to cease publishing certain classified government documents, known collectively as "the Pentagon Papers." Faced with an unprecedented attempt at press censorship, the *Times* promptly called on the aid of a distinguished law firm that it had been retaining for several decades. The distinguished law firm flatly refused to defend the *Times* against the violation of its constitutional liberties. To publish the documents in wartime, a senior partner said, was shameful, disgraceful, and unpatriotic. It would weaken the nation's resolve

and give aid and comfort to its enemies. As its patriotic duty to the country, the distinguished law firm willingly sacrificed its most prestigious client. But which America did the law firm so patriotically serve? It served the corporate entity known as the nation. What it did not serve was the American republic. To defend the infringement of liberty, to refuse to uphold the Constitution in a crisis, to support the alien methods of despotism—surely that in a republic is shameful, disgraceful, and unpatriotic. The nation pulls one way, the republic another. They are today deadly rivals for the love and loyalty of the American people.

Choosing up sides

IT IS AN ODD SORT of rivalry, one that the republic, on the face of it, ought to win hands down. The republic is the great central fact of American life. It is the constitution of liberty and self-government, the frame and arena of all American politics. It gives laws their legitimacy and cloaks public office with public authority. The republic is what Americans founded when they founded America. The nation, by comparison, is a poor, dim thing, for the nation is merely America conceived as a corporate unit, a hollow shell. The flag is its emblem, "Uncle Sam" is its nickname; yet there is virtually nothing in the internal life of America that can bring that abstract entity to life.

It is not the people writ large, the way it is, say, in France or Iran. Americans are not fellow nationals, we are fellow citizens. As G. K. Chesterton rightly remarked after paying a visit, America is more a creed than a country, and the creed is republicanism. The ties of a



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Walter Karp
REPUBLICAN
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common nationality do not bind Americans together and never did. Even when the overwhelming majority of Americans were of English descent the very act that created America was a solemn declaration of independence from mere ties of nationality. Spurning nationality is our deepest political experience as Americans. I used to wonder as a child why the Boston Tea Party rebels dressed up as red Indians. It seemed a queer thing to do, since the rebels, by and large, were not fond of Indians. Now I see what they meant. The tea dumpers were rebelling not only against English rule but also against English nationality. They were either free citizens or rude savages, but "true-born Englishmen" they were insisting they were not. Love of the nation, mistakenly called nationalism, does not spring from nationality in America. It is not the flame that once burned in the hearts of stateless Poles and colonized Irishmen, that once fired Italians with a dream of political unity. We were citizens of the republic long before we ever saw ourselves as members of a nation. In the early days of the republic, the very word *nation*, innocuous in itself, actually offended fastidious republicans. They detected an aroma of despotism about it, and they were not, it turns out, all that far wrong.

We have traveled a long way since then, but devotion to the nation in America is still, inherently, devotion to an abstract entity. Orators at American Legion conventions call the sentiment "old-fashioned patriotism," but American memories are short. Devotion to the nation—"nationalism," I will call it—is not very old in America. In 1852 Abraham Lincoln lauded his hero Henry Clay for being a patriot in two sorts of ways. Clay loved his country, Lincoln

said, "partly because it was his own country but mostly because it was a free country." To love America because you cherish the constitution of liberty is republican patriotism—what the distinguished law firm cared nothing about. To love America because America helped rear you Lincoln took to be merely natural; but nationalism is not even patriotism of this natural kind. Natural patriotism is personal and concrete. It is love not of an entity but of things familiar and formative. During World War II a much-repeated story went around about the GI slogging through Italy's mud who was asked what he thought he was fighting for. He was fighting, he said, for Mom's apple pie, hot dogs, and the right to cheer the Brooklyn Dodgers. It sounded childish at the time, and it was. Natural patriotism is childlike. At bottom it is scarcely more than love of one's own childhood. There is nothing childlike about nationalism, however, and nothing natural about it. We were a patriotic people long before nationalism existed.

That would be hard to prove in a paragraph but occasionally history recovers from the past a forgotten voice that reveals with wonderful economy the historical novelty of the new. One such voice was an angry editorial published by the *New York Journal of Commerce* in the year 1895. What aroused the ire of the newspaper was what it called "the artificial patriotism being worked up at the present time." And how was it being "worked up," this fabricated patriotism that was neither natural nor republican? Through the new and, to the *Journal of Commerce*, repugnant "fashion of hanging the flag from every schoolhouse and giving the boys military drill." America was well into its second century before those in author-



thought patriotism required flagpoles on
hools.

For that matter we were well into our second century before anyone thought patriotism required schoolchildren to pledge allegiance to the flag. The first time the pledge was ever cited in a classroom was in 1892. Until then the only civilian American required to swear loyalty to the country was the President of the United States, but he pledged himself to "preserve, protect, and defend" not the nation, which has no legal existence, but the Constitution.

The paraphernalia of nationalism is quite new. Even flag-worship is new. In the late nineteenth century "Old Glory" was indeed a popular emblem, so popular that merchants used it to hawk corsets, cough drops, and player pianos. There was nothing sacred then about the flag, precisely because the cult of the nation did not yet exist. The elaborate etiquette that now surrounds the national regalia was not concocted until 1923, the handiwork of the War Department and the newly formed American Legion. The object of the flag code was to transform the country's banner into a semi-holy talisman and so give the abstraction called the nation a semblance of life. No doubt the War Department half succeeded. When certain anti-Vietnam War protesters wanted to enrage their fellow citizens they burned American flags, proving how caught up in the flag cult, one way or another, most Americans had become.

I can still remember my own terrifying induction to the more recondite aspects of twentieth-century flag-worship. It occurred at a Boy Scout meeting in April, 1946, when the scoutmaster asked the assembled tenderfoots what we were supposed to do when the family's

flag had grown tattered and unseemly. Throw it in the garbage, yelled one young heathen with no future in scouting. If you did that, the scoutmaster replied in hushed and portentous tones, you would be arrested and sent to prison. Fear and awe swept over us at the thought that an ordinary little flag—*private property* your father might have bought at a Woolworth's—could bring down upon you the majestic wrath of the all-seeing American Government, a thunderbolt, as it were, from Mount Olympus. The scoutmaster was exaggerating, but not by much. What he did not tell us, however, was that the law you broke by rudely disposing of a tattered flag did not originate in the misty, immemorial past. It had been enacted by Congress just four years before, in 1942.

A nation abroad

IN CREATING THE CULT of the nation—"the artificial patriotism" of 1895—the mummery of flag-worship played its part, but the part is minor. It took far more than sacred bunting and schoolroom pledges to transform a lifeless abstraction—rooted in nothing, springing from nothing, legally nonexistent—into the powerful rival of the venerable American republic. What it took was the whole weight and force of American foreign policy since the late nineteenth century. The reason for this is quite simple. The American nation, which has no life at home beyond what bunting will impart, comes to life internationally, for only in active dealings with other countries does the abstract entity, the nation, genuinely act as an entity. The republic exists for its own sake. The American nation lives

"Love of the nation, mistakenly called nationalism, does not spring from nationality in America."



by J. Perfection

abroad, and nationalism in America is always a species of internationalism.

Once, on a radio discussion show, the moderator, vexed with me for "tearing down America," began delivering a long harangue about the horrors of dictatorship (in Yugoslavia, a country he had recently visited). How then, he asked in conclusion, could anyone really criticize American politics when you compare our freedom with Tito's repressions? That is the true international voice of the nationalist. He extols liberty in America by comparing it with despotism abroad. The republican, by contrast, compares liberty in America with one standard only, the one established in the principles and promise of the American republic itself. To the nationalist, new-fashioned patriot of the twentieth century, America is always a nation among nations.

It is most fully a nation, most intensely alive as an entity, when it wages war against other nations. Even in peacetime it is the memory of past wars and the menace of future wars that keep the idea of the nation alive in America. War and the cult of the nation are virtually one and the same. That is why the "artificial patriotism" of 1895 included "giving the boys military drill": why it was the War Department that promoted the flag code: why "patriotic" parades are almost invariably military displays: why the veterans' organizations are the most strenuous guardians of nationalism—America, to the Legionnaire, is America at war, the war in which he himself served. Therein lies the radical distinction between patriotism and the cult of the nation: Americans needed no wars to love their country because it was their own: still less did they need war to love their country because it was free. It is the artificial patriotism of the nation that requires war, for without war the nation is but a shade wrapped in hunting.

Not many Americans love war for its own sake. Indeed, the only genuinely popular war we ever fought was the Spanish-American War, partly because it lasted only a few months. In America the cult of the nation does not exalt military glory. What it exalts are the repressive virtues of wartime. What it cloaks with patriotic ardor is hostility toward the virtues of a republic at peace.

During the two years preceding America's entry into World War I—a war that the overwhelming majority of Americans were desperately determined to stay out of—those who favored intervention actually set forth in a fierce pamphleteering agitation the virtues they hoped war would instill in postwar America. Mindful that nationalism was still in its infancy (whipping a fifth-rate power in 1898

had helped, but not much), the pamphleteers wanted war to "forge a national soul" for America, which apparently had no "soul" since it was just a venerated republic. They hoped war would give birth to "a new religion of vital patriotism—that is, of consecration to the State," a consecration sadly lacking in the republic, like the very concept of America as a "State." Mindful that the nation can only live abroad, they hoped an overseas war would permanently inebriate Americans with "a sense of international duty." Otherwise the nation would fade from our minds. Above all, they wanted war to bring about a "change in the whole attitude of the people toward government." It would teach the rising generations, seared by memories of a great foreign war, to think more of what they "owed" their rulers and less about what they could "get" from them. It would teach them, too, "wonderful respect" for the powerful. The result would be a postwar America that would reject the internationalists' aim, the mission of "complete internal peace."

The interventionists of 1916 wanted war to bring forth a new America—the second America—consecrated to fratricidal warfare and dedicated to the proposition that a few should rule and the rest should serve. Citizens of the republic would be transformed into docile agents of the American "State." A people taught for 150 years to guard and cherish its liberties would learn, instead, to guard and cherish its "national soul." An exacting and troublesome citizenry (which Americans had been during the years between 1890 and 1916) would henceforth ask no more of its governors than the humble opportunity to serve their international objectives. A "new religion" of nationalism would eclipse and even supplant the old republican patriotism. That, in truth, was the point, the Archimedean point, of the interventionist enterprise. Among liberal intellectuals a few years ago, it was fashionable to deride the popular American "cult of the Constitution." They thought it a bulwark of "reaction" and the American people, by implication, the dupes of the rich. The interventionists of 1916 knew better. It was the cult of the Constitution that they wished to obliterate and the cult of the nation that they hoped to erect in its place, through a titanic foreign war—the only possible war at doing it. As Ernst Berntson once said, if the rulers cannot get along with the people they will just have to elect a new people.

The virtues of the citizen-turned-nationalist would be simple, logical, and straightforward. For the sake of the nation, whose strength abroad demands "complete internal peace,"





**THEY LEARNED TO TALK
AT YOUR KNEE.**

THEY'LL LEARN TO DRINK AT YOUR ELBOW.

Your children imitate you.
Good and bad.

And they'll get their first
lessons in drinking from you.

During your cocktail hour.

At your parties.

And your drinking habits
will be theirs when they're old
enough to drink.

Make sure they're good ones.

Seagram
Distillers Company.

would do all that "internal peace" requires. He would forgo the exercise of his liberties—to speak, to act, to voice independent judgments—and urge his fellow citizens to do likewise, for the sea of liberty is turbulent and weakens the nation in the performance of its "international duties." For the sake of internal peace he would rest content with his lot and cease dividing the counsels of the powerful with selfish demands upon his government. In domestic affairs he would mind his own business and ask for nothing. In foreign affairs he would mind everyone else's business and call hotly for action. Eternal vigilance, liberty's steep price, he would willingly abandon because only a people that shows "confidence" in its rulers can provide them with the power to act forcefully abroad. Mutual respect, which citizens pay to each other simply because they are fellow citizens, he would replace with the patriotism of mutual suspicion—"positive polarization," as a Presidential Administration was to call it fifty-five years later. His own "vital patriotism" he would display by condemning as "disloyal" and "un-American" those who still cherished the republic and still fought to preserve and perfect it. Sedition, the crime of weakening the nation by critical words, he would undertake to root out among his neighbors ("America—Love it or leave it!"), although officially no such crime exists in America. Such was the new-modeled citizen envisioned by the warmongers of 1916 and extolled ever since by the promoters of nationalism.

An indestructible republic



THE AGITATORS of 1916 did not go unanswered, for the republic had not yet been eclipsed. We had not yet reached the stage, for example, at which a respected political commentator describing "America as a civilization" could call the Constitution "at most" a "symbol" of national unity, a flag made of parchment. Despite the agitators' fine talk about fighting in Europe for "democracy against autocracy," their critics (who spoke for the great majority of Americans) were not deceived. They understood quite clearly that the interventionists wanted to establish a deadly rival to the American republic and a fount of new virtues that snuffed out republican virtues. The war agitation itself, said one antiwar Senator, James Vardaman of Mississippi, was "a colossal blood-stained monument marking the turning point in the life of this Government." And he was right. If we enter the European war, said

another antiwar Senator, William J. Stone of Missouri, "we will never again have this same old republic." And he, too, was right. What the interventionists wanted, their critics said, was a "Prussianized" America, an America whose citizens no longer loved their country because it was free but merely because it was feared. The critics' voices have long been forgotten, but like the angry editorial in the *Journal of Commerce* they reveal in their quaint, out-of-date language the historical novelty of the way we live now.

The novelty has long since worn off. In 1916 only a handful of Americans dared call openly for a "change in the whole attitude of the people toward government." Forty-five years and three foreign wars later, it was an American President, freshly sworn in, who was hailed for telling his fellow citizens to "ask not" what their country could do for them but to ask what they could do for their country while it paid "any price," bore "any burden," met "any hardship" to defend liberty *abroad*. Sixty-one years after 1916 another President, newly inaugurated, warned his fellow citizens that the chief "crisis" facing America was *their* lack of "confidence" in their betters. In the corridors of power the promoters of nationalism are triumphant. Understandably they trust and advance only their own kind.

When the Nixon Administration was shopping around for a new legal counsel to the President, a bright young attorney working for the House Judiciary Committee caught the eye of the White House. Searching scrutiny certified him as a loyal, unblemished patriot who met the stringent requirements of the highest level of security clearance (something not required for any government service until World War II). And what did this eminent, trustworthy young patriot believe? That an American President had the right to do whatever he could get away with. Had the young attorney shown signs of doubting that truth, subversive proposition, would the FBI have "cleared" him? I doubt it. For the past twenty-five years the FBI, which, like the nation, first blossomed in World War I, has kept a secret file on the American Civil Liberties Union in Chicago, an allegedly "disloyal" organization. That assessment reveals much about the two Americas. Disloyal to the republic the ACLU certainly is not, since its chief activity is providing legal aid to citizens whose constitutional rights have been violated. Is it disloyal to the nation? Of course it is. Citizens active enough to require government infringement of their rights obviously disrupt the nation's "internal peace." Who but the disloyal would think it duty to defend them? There is nothing illogical

about nationalism. Much of its strength in the country derives from its simple logic.

WHAT CONFOUNDS and unnerves the nationalist is the indestructible fact of the American republic.

He lives in enemy territory among a people still only half-conquered. That is one reason why J. Edgar Hoover strained every resource of his organization to provide Americans with a reassuring image—efficient yet politically innocuous—of the FBI. He didn't do so because he thought Americans could inevitably admire his G-men. Nobody labors to achieve the inevitable. On the contrary, Hoover feared that citizens-turned-nationalists just might revert back again. So long as the republic endures, nothing can wholly prevent that reversion. The great historian of ancient Rome Theodor Mommsen once observed that a republic founded by popular consent exerts an authority over its citizens so strong, so pervasive, so intimately entwined with their lives that the citizenry cannot even imagine a life outside its sway. So it is with the American republic. If nationalism runs strong in the country—and it does—the hearts of Americans are nonetheless divided, like the country in which we now live.

Until 1965 the division of our hearts, part nationalist, part republican, lay concealed under the crushing weight of a quarter-century of war and continual foreign crisis. Then something happened. The nationalists in power overreached themselves. A President who promised war against poverty and no wider war in Asia launched a massive war in Asia and left the poor as poor as ever. To his shock and dismay, divided American hearts did not "rally to the flag." There was no outpouring of nationalist sentiment. A magazine writer visiting Kansas in 1967 described the strange war temper in what was soon to be called "Middle America." On the one hand, not a single Kansas town had played host to an antiwar demonstration. On the other, local draft boards were cheerfully deferring every youth who offered any plausible grounds for deferment. Angry moral arguments against the war played little part in producing that surprisingly tepid response—a response that no contemporary poll could detect. What lay behind it was a profound sense of political betrayal. A President had promised peace and given us war, had committed a gross breach of faith and treated his countrymen with sovereign contempt. We were not nationalists enough to cheer the fruits of a betrayal so deep; we were still republican enough to resent the contempt of the mighty.

Loathed from coast to coast, the faithless President was peacefully driven from power. Six years later, another President, as lawless as his predecessor had been faithless, discovered, too, that Americans were not nationalist enough to "stand by" a President for the sake of the nation, that we were still republican enough to resent the lawlessness of the mighty. He, too, was peacefully driven from power.

A half-conquered people had asserted, if only in a negative way, their old republican patriotism. There were still limits to what even citizens-turned-nationalists would tolerate, and they were republican limits, so deeply American that Europeans, nationalists to their marrow, could not even begin to fathom the events of that riotous decade. In those events the profound antagonism between nation and republic at last stood fully revealed.

That Americans would not tolerate faithless or lawless Presidents should have been grounds for modest rejoicing. I think the American people did rejoice—in private. I think we did take quiet pride in acting, for once, as a free people should. I think we felt a measure of public happiness in seeing the ponderous machinery of the Constitution set in motion for a republican end. What else can explain the extraordinary outpouring of good feeling on July 4, 1976, a celebration of the birth of the Republic that turned the strife-torn streets of New York into a scene of tumultuous good will and mutual respect so palpable it seemed for a few sweet hours that republican patriotism had had a rebirth?

In the corridors of power where nationalists congregate, there was no rejoicing whatever. That the "religion of vital patriotism" had not entirely snuffed out republican sentiment in America brought only wringing of hands, gnashing of teeth, and dire warnings of imminent disaster. Americans had refused to rally behind a war treacherously begun and dubiously justified. What was that, the nationalists say, but proof of the people's lack of "will" and "resolve" to fulfill their "international duty"—as if only the powerful were licensed to define our duties. Americans had refused to let two successive Presidents abuse power and betray their trust. What was that, the nationalists say, but a dangerous "weakening of the Presidency"—as if Presidential despotism alone kept America intact. Americans had shaken off their political torpor and participated in public affairs. What was that, a future aide of President Carter wrote in 1975, but a perilous want of "deference" in the American people—as if servility (pronounced "civility" by so-called neo-conservatives) could possibly be a virtue in a republic constituted for self-

"What confounds and unnerves the nationalist is the indestructible fact of the American republic."





government. Americans had exercised keen vigilance over the powerful. What was that, the nationalists say, but a national "crisis of confidence"—as if the powerful enjoyed a divine right to our trust. To impugn the republican virtue of vigilance, the nationalists even coined a new name for it. They called it "post-Watergate morality," as if submission to corrupt power and blind faith in one's leaders were the old, the hallowed morality, like the "old-fashioned patriotism" of the American Legion. Every republican virtue that surfaced so surprisingly in the tumultuous decade, the nationalists, citing the rival virtues of wartime, have by now obliquely condemned. They are still trying to elect a new people.

The energizing principle

OFFSPRING OF WAR, the cult of the nation is itself a weapon of political warfare, the undeclared war waged by the powerful few against the political vitality of the American republic. It is the only popular weapon they have. The republic cannot be destroyed—its collapse would bring ruin to all. Its legitimacy cannot be subverted—it is the source of all legitimacy in America. Even today the elementary maxims of the republic cannot be defied with impunity, as President Nixon learned to his regret. The moment he claimed to stand above the laws his political doom was in sight. Too many Americans still remembered the copybook rule: "We are a government of laws, not of men." Americans, I think, can even distinguish in a general way the few genuine heroes of the republic from the common herd of famous leaders. In Washington, D.C., a city crammed with memorials to the undeserving—think of the Sam Rayburn Building and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts—Congress has not yet dared to create more than three major monuments: to Washington, to Jefferson, and to Lincoln, the two great founders and the one great savior of the American republic.

Still, that does not add up to much. The republic is more than the form of our government plus a few rudimentary maxims and memories. It embodies a profound principle of political action—an "energizing" principle, as Jefferson called it. It is supposed to operate at all times and under all conditions against oligarchy, special privilege, and arbitrary power. The energizing principle is the preservation and perfecting of self-government, the securing to each citizen of an equal voice in his own government. That grand object, as

Lincoln once said, we must as republicans constantly strive for, constantly try to "approximate" even if we can never perfectly achieve it. Without its energizing principle the republic becomes a hollow form, or still worse a ponderous hindrance. Yet it is a truly burdensome principle to live by. It is easier to be servile than free, easier to submit to the rule of a few than to keep up the endless struggle for self-rule. It is easier to fight enemies abroad than to fight for the republic at home. That is why the virtue of virtues in a republic, as Montesquieu long ago observed, is the citizen's love of the republic—"to be jealous of naught save the republican character of their country," as the Workingmen's party put it 150 years ago when it campaigned for free public schools in America. That is why the enemies of popular self-government have striven to erect and strengthen the rival cult of the nation, by war if possible, by the menace of war when there is a perilous lull in the fighting. It is the only way to undermine the people's love of the republic and subvert among the citizenry themselves its energizing principle.

In the name of the nation, that undermining goes on unceasingly. It is the reason why the one thing never taught in our free public schools is "to be jealous of naught save the republican character" of our country. In our own schooldays we learned more about Benito Mussolini and the wonders of the Panama Canal than we did about Abraham Lincoln, whose birthday is no longer celebrated in a dozen states that once paid his memory that homage. Above all, it is the reason why what old Henry Cabot Lodge called the "large" foreign policy—the policy of having a busy foreign policy—has governed our foreign affairs for so many long years. It is precisely the "large" policy that keeps the nation alive and the republic in twilight.

After forty consecutive years of war and rumor of war—one-fifth the republic's entire span of existence—it is a wonder, perhaps, that republican virtues survive at all. That they do bears witness to the awesome authority of our republican foundations, since almost nothing else in contemporary America keeps them alive. What has not survived is honest political utterance. In the two Americas everything gets mislabeled. Subverters of the republic hunt down "subversives," and enemies of the republican principle decide who is and who is not "un-American." We describe "old-fashioned patriots" those who warn that American liberties endanger the nation and the "religion of vital patriotism—that is, of consecration to the State," nonexistent since 1916, is the "neo-conservatism" of 1979.



The first generation of full-timers

by Ronald Blythe

Our earthly time allowance has rapidly shot up, from an average of forty years to an average of seventy years-plus within the experience of all the old people alive at present. Nothing comparable to it has been known before. Although it was accepted that the body had been programmed to last for the classic three-score-years-and-ten, until now there was an all-too-eloquent proof that very few ever did, and for a man to "see his time out," as they used to say, was exceptional. We counter this fact by declaring that one was old at forty in those days. Yet one was not, at least not in the sense of cumulative time, which defines actual old age. A vast number of men and women became toil-worn and disease-marked in middle age to a degree no longer seen in Western

society, but however exhausted and unhygienic their flesh, it was unlikely to have been senescent when the grave claimed it.

Apart from the minority whose mortal clock—the workings of which are still a mystery—went the full round, most were not involved in the aging process and seemed to have lived without thought or preparation for it. It is one of the essential ways in which our forebears differ from us. Their knowledge of the destruction of the physical self was quite unlike anything we understand by hospital visits or by simply walking down the street. If a Renaissance or Georgian man could return he would be as much astonished by the sight of two or three thousand septuagenarians and octogenarians lining a southern resort on a summer's day in their preponderantly white and palely colored clothes as he would by a television set. Astonished and maybe shocked. His was a world where it was the exception to go gray, to reach the meropause, to retire, to become senile, and to acquire that subtle blend of voice, skin, and behavioral changes that features so largely in our long-lived times. Because of

Ronald Blythe lives in rural England, where he conducted the interviews with the aged that make up his forthcoming book *The View in Winter: Reflections on Old Age* (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich), from which Harper's has excerpted the sections on these pages. Mr. Blythe is the author of *A Treasonable Growth*, a novel, *The Age of Illusion*, a social history of the years 1919-1940, and *Akenfield: Portrait of an English Village*. Copyright © 1979 by Ronald Blythe.

its customary incompleteness, life before operated from a quite different premise. For one thing, it contained a precariousness that we, for all our nuclear hazards, no longer feel. For another, it conditioned a man to accept his cut-down or halved time scale as that against which he would need to plan his education or craft training, his work and his children's future, and to think of reaching seventy in quasi-religious terms.

Another contrast between old age then and old age now is that we place dying in what we take to be its logical position, which is at the close of a long life—while our ancestors accepted the futility of placing it in any position at all. In the midst of life we are in death, they said, and they meant it. To them it was a fact, to us it is a metaphor. It secretly disturbs us to see old people talking and behaving as if they were in the midst of life. We ask ourselves, "How can they . . . with so little time to go?" But to love and travel and fight and bluster in the face of death, as it once confronted the early middle-aged, was thought brave and admirable. It meant that people were once, for all their fatal illnesses, vital, capable, and very much alive up to the edge of their graves. It was said of the seventy-year-old Elizabeth I. when death came to her, that she was surprised by time. But she was old and this was gallantry. The manner in which death suddenly announced itself to the average mortal was indeed a surprise and the subject of a poignant literature.

The common fate of a brief life bred apprehension, swift-moving ambition, or piety, according to one's character, but because the majority of men knew no other life it had a normality that is now outside our comprehension. So altered are we that it sometimes seems we are reaching the stage when we may have to announce ourselves to death, and may find its avoidance of us hurtful and neglectful. In hospitals up and down the land lie the finished lives that have been cut down by death. It is as though one needs a special strength to die, and not a final weakness. Yet weakness is what characterizes the old most of all. Might there be a power in this unique weakness that sustains age and makes it as positive a time as youth or maturity? One of the reasons the old suffer is that the non-old dislike the notion that the old are vital still.

John Cowper Powys, the novelist, wrote in 1944, when he was seventy-two:

How well old people come to know that peculiar look of suppressed disgust which their obstinate concentration on some restricted sensual pleasure excites in the feverish idealism of the young and in the impatient pragmatism of the middle-aged! What is their wisest method of mental defence against the shameful discomfort caused by this look?



Sentenced to li

...e talk and think and general preoccupation ourselves with this new fate of an old age for everybody. But we never say, as we might with another general advancement, "How wonderful it is that by the year 2000 everybody will be more or less guaranteed a full life!" Instead we mutter, our faces thickened with anxiety, "Just think, in twenty years time half the population will be over sixty." We rarely add that any blame for an imbalance must be shared by the young for not having babies, or that when we reach sixty our energies and hopes and intentions are as likely to carry us forward into the welcome decade to come as much as the next old man's.

The economics of national longevity apart, the ordinariness of living to be old is too novel a thing at the moment to appreciate. The old have been made to feel that they have been sentenced to life and turned into a matter for public concern. They are the first generations of the full-timers and thus the first generations of old people for whom the state, experimentally, grudgingly, and uncertainly, is having to make special supportive conditions.

Many of today's old people had such rough starts, such small scraps of education, wages, and possessions generally, that they feel they are ending the days in clover. "Manage" is a word they much use and having "managed" then, they manage now.

The skill and determination with which they are able to return to their first memories is equalled only by that of the world's eels slipping back to the Sargasso Sea. The aged find peace in childhood but none of maturity remembered and little in the present. So they embark, along with any willing ear, for the beginning where things still move fast and are bright and clearly defined.

Small events tend to have the greatest claim to be remembered. Seldom do the very old deal in the epic. They specialize in flakes of colorful minutiae, as they know that, when they are dead, it is not great deeds from their maturity that will recall their individual tones but the way they described a day on the river long ago. What they are saying in essence is "There are records to tell you when I was demobbed

married, honored/disgraced, sacked/promoted, but, I want to tell you what I now want to hear about myself. Those matters that haven't been entered on my passport, in the school register, on the call-up papers, because I *must* be more than I am officially!"

The old describe penurious and exhausting working lives without rancor. They are proud if they never cheated, and they are proud if they did and got away with it. But some find that now is the deprived time. They are aware of ceaseless deprivation and of everything being snatched from them or placed out of reach, and of being narrowed and lessened and ground out of their very personality. They are shaken by the extent of their impoverishment, both spiritually and materially, and are disturbed when such guardians of their riches as a loving family or a good doctor are powerless to prevent its happening. Tolstoy dealt with this terrible dismantling of the ego in his story "The Death of Ivan Ilyich," in which a middle-aged man who has acquired everything necessary for his social identification among the successful and the conventional has to watch himself stripped down by cancer until all that is left of him is a scream. Constantly, as one talks to the aged, one feels this struggle to say who they are, not just who and what they have been.

Many old people, however, simply want what they have had. They want it badly, and there is never much diminishment in the strength of their hankering for what has been, for all the convenient talk about the merciful failing of desire. Old age is not an emancipation from desire for most of us; that is a large part of its tragedy. The old want (but their sensible refusal to put such wants into words suggests to us that they have given up wanting) their professional status back, or their looks, or their circle—which is now a lot of crossed-off names in the address book—or sex, or just normal future-oriented existence. Most of all they want to be wanted. It crashes on them like a nightmare, the leaden fact they are eighty, and that now it is often not so much a matter of their being incapable of having some of the things they want, as there being laws and conventions preventing their access to them. Perhaps, as the young begin to realize that eventually they themselves are likely to be "old" for twenty or more years, radical changes will effect what the aged demand and could still have. Certainly, we are likely to see retirement-refusal, and a lifting of one of the last big sexual taboos, that placed on sex in old age.

Modern geriatric psychiatry speaks of the old being grounded in their narcissism, a poignant term that eloquently compresses the whole business of what we once were, and what we must inevitably become, should we see our time out. To be sexually prohibited, even if it is only in some ignorant, unwritten, and

folk-belief sense, is a gratuitous addition to this hurt. The natural checks of old age lie in sublimations and in the slowly dying organism itself, not in sexual repressions. In any case, they are only a surface thing, for the old learn how to prevent too great a wounding of their narcissism by healing forays into the past, where there can still be found much of what is necessary to maintain a self-acceptable image of themselves.

There is much in our treatment of the old and our attitudes toward them reminiscent of those that dominated thinking about the "intractable" problem of the poor in the nineteenth century. They are not *us*, is what we are often saying (politely and humanely, of course), and there are so many of them! Such a situation can change only when it becomes natural to say that the old *are* us—and to believe it.



Imogen Cunningham and her model Twinka. Photo © Copyright by Judy Dater from Imogen Cunningham: A Portrait, by Judy Dater, to be published in October by Little, Brown & Co., Inc. as a N.Y. Graphic Society book. The photographs on the following pages are from Cunningham's book After Ninety, begun in 1975 when she was ninety-two and published posthumously (by University of Washington Press) in 1977.



The horrors of naught-at-all

he inescapability of old age is now secretly the new predicament for many. And even those who pray, and save, for a long life have the feeling that by eating and behaving in the way that they believe will encourage longevity they are tempting fate. Some comfort is gained by seeing "old Mr. Smith, who is wonderful," at eighty-two, and by avoiding the sight of old Mrs. Everard, who *was* wonderful at eighty but who now lies, year after year, under a tidy white hump of hospital quilt that is almost as still as her little green mound will be—though when? That is her quandary, the slow-motion departure.

To be a potential candidate for the Tithonus situation is the great dread of the aged. The possibility haunts the latter years of retirement. Tithonus was a beautiful young man who so delighted in being alive that he asked Aurora, goddess of morning, to make him immortal. She did, but as it had not occurred to him to request perpetual youthfulness as well, he simply became an old man who could not die. Eventually, taking pity on him after listening to his repeated prayer that he should be freed from his never-ending dissolution, the goddess turned him into a grasshopper. Not, presumably, the burdensome insect of Ecclesiastes, which some have interpreted as an image of the withered, useless genitals of an old man, nor yet the swollen-paunched locust of the modern translators of the same passage, but the leaping, chirping creature whose alacrity is the antithesis of fixed senility. Tennyson's finest poem is based on this legend. In his "Tithonus" we hear the voice of all those old people who have long passed "the goal of ordinance" and who yet are cursed to open their drugged gaze on morning after new morning. The poem is the most eloquent case made for those whose last fate it is to be toyed with by time, to be mutilated and mocked by it. If the Mrs. Everards of the proliferating geriatric wards could utter, it would be against every new morning. Nor is this longing to depart confined to advanced senility in its tragically comprehending moments; old men who still appear to be enjoying life will suddenly chill the talk by inquiring the way to death as matter-of-factly as they might ask the way to

Totnes. A man of eighty-four, widowed, and with morbid pain and difficulties than might have been supposed from his delightful conversation, turned to a contemporary as they were leaving a party and said, "I'll tell you what I *really* want to know. I want to know how I get off the hook."

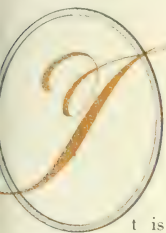
It is now increasingly accepted that the first decade of retirement is not old age. Senescence, though visible enough during these years, is not devastatingly apparent. People often live with it very comfortably. They put their feet up intellectually as well as physically and turn the worries of the world off. They promote a heightened sense of well-being with "little treats" and exude stability and permanence. They do vast amount of unpaid volunteer work and are always "on the go" in directions that do not tire them in the deep psychic way that bringing up children and the exacting demands of a career once tired them. The Tithonus of retirement, though so near to him, cannot conceive the Tithonus of the geriatric ward. His prayer is that he will live long but not *that* long. He says—quite often—"I told my doctor—he's become such a friend—'Doctor, don't let me become a cabbage. Whatever you do, you will tell me, won't you, if you see it beginning to happen, if I do funny things?'" cabbage? Why not a rose or an apple? Because cabbage has come to symbolize the most tightly furled and withdrawn member of that vegetable kingdom and one which the medieval mind placed lowest in the hierarchy of organic beings. However, a man cannot become a cabbage. What he becomes—sometimes—is a very slow-dying man.

When people are old it isn't just egotism and senescent liberation of the libido that speeds them down the autobiographical routes at such a determined pace. It is the compulsion to piece together true self from all the fragments that have no place in the official file. "So you see why I had to leave Cardiff that September," concludes the old woman. "So you see, I was quite a boy!" says the old man with satisfaction. You don't see—not exactly—but the talkers do. They see themselves as no one sees them anymore. But if we don't see clearly, we feel, and that is important. To be able to arouse more than that solicitude feeling which we reserve for the over-eighties is triumph for the old. A breakthrough. It causes them to hope against hope that the next step can be taken, the step that leads to some aspect of them that can be loved; for, as that eloquent Swiss geriatric apologist Paul Tournier flatly declares,

I have come to the conclusion that there is one essential, profound, underlying problem, and it is that the old are not loved. They do not feel themselves to be loved, and too many people treat them with indiffer-

ence and seek no contact with them. . . . I think of the multitudes of retired people who hold aloof, who do know that people are concerned that they should have, as we say, decent living conditions, but who know that no personal interest is being taken in them.

Unable to love the old, we approach them via sentiment, duty, and an eye to our own eventual decline. We make sure that they are housed, fed, medicated, and facing their favorite channel. We see ourselves in them and they see—what is it that the aged see? Down in a young arm? God in majesty? The world's superstructure collapsing? We care for them without real interest and believe that they must be unhappy because we would not be happy to be old.



It is surprising how many post-gerontological studies, both European and American, examine the aging process as if it had no previous literary or even scientific history—as though we had to reach today's proportions before it was sufficiently intriguing to stand alongside love, death, sex, adventure, faith, art, work, war, et cetera, in the continuum of written human experience. Simone de Beauvoir decries most literary conceptions of old age up to the nineteenth century because they leave out the old age of the majority, the common people, and describe only that of the privileged classes, thus giving a false idea of its personal and social effects at any period.

The fact is that if centuries of poets, playwrights, and novelists have not gone to the subject of old age as often as they have to those of love, adventure, crime, power, et cetera, they certainly have not dodged it. If we include journals, autobiography, and biography, the literature of old age will be seen to be immense. At somehow, perhaps because we care to think less about its existing as a collective comment than about the assembled knowledge we possess on every other aspect of the human condition, there is a feeling that it has been ignored or avoided. Or that it is fresh ground that we have got to brace ourselves to explore. And while we know that the mass of the people do live and die with minimal reference to their ever having existed, what is said in the literature of old age is as

generally applicable to them as to the privileged classes. Shakespeare, James Shirley, Thomas Gray, Thomas Hardy, and many other writers use the ultimate sameness of the fate of rich and poor as a repeating clock in their work. The fate of Lear was the archetypal fate of many an old peasant whose children were greedy for his farm. His abdication of all that he was in the interests of the young was only different in degree from that of the clerk giving up his desk, the craftsman his bench, or the miner his lamp to pressing successors. Lear, too, makes the most ignored of all human requests, that one should be allowed to remain within the circle until the very end: "If you do love old men; if your sweet sway / Allow obedience—if yourselves are old, / Make it your cause . . . !"

It is Lear also who connects an emancipated libido with geriatric collapse—"When the mind's free the body's delicate." In these and in statements throughout the play four centuries of every condition of men can see their final selves. When they look up now to the eyes running the bank, the shop, the pub, the church, the daughter's home, what is it that they repeatedly read in them but, "O sir, you are old, / Nature in you stands on the very verge / Of her confine"

Or, if the old dare to show that they can still keep up with things that are strictly preserved for the young, is the sharp reminder given to Falstaff any different from that given by society today?



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Do you set down your name in the scroll of youth, that are written down old with all the characters of age? Have you not a moist eye, a dry hand, a yellow cheek, a white beard, a decreasing leg, and increasing belly? Is not your voice broken, your wind short, your chin double, your wit single, and every part about you blasted with antiquity? And will you yet call yourself young? Fie, fie, fie, Sir John!

To know one's place is now the chief duty of the aged, to refuse the placing a crime.

Chaucer would have none of this. He probably wrote *The Canterbury Tales* when in his forties. In this masterpiece, he draws a rollicking picture of the old participating in anything they fancied, with beneficial or farcical results. If one is like the old woman in "The Nun's Priest's Tale" who reared chickens—including Chanticleer and Pertelote—and was content with her lot, her diet kept healthy by a narrow purse, her body exercised by hard work and, now and then, a jolly dance, there was little to fear. No gout, no apoplexy, and nothing ridiculous or repellent for the world to condemn. But if one is self-deceiving, like two of the five husbands of the Wife of Bath, old men who tell themselves that she has married them for their passion, then one is simply unrealistic. Both old husbands had plenty of opportunity to discover that she "never had much for old bacon" yet were unable to see themselves in this category, and so the Wife gives them belltinker, more for their vanity than for their inadequacies. As she ages, she is scandalously honest about her passion for a boy named Jankin, the sight of whose legs at her fifth husband's funeral besot her. She weds Jankin and enjoys him, once she has managed to stop his reading books, which are his real lust. But soon he dies like the rest, this being an instance of ripeness annihilating greenness. The Wife adores living and gets better and better at it, storing up experience on which to nourish her old age.

In "The Merchant's Tale" a bachelor knight named January decides, at sixty, to get married. Unlike the impotent old men of the other tales, January is sexually vigorous and has awakened to the realization that it is now or never. His only worry is that his old age may turn out to be so blissful and successful that Purgatory won't provide its traditional "happy release." His bride is a teenager named May, and January is immensely kind to her and is as active in bed as a lad. But, as Chaucer, with his deep understanding of the life cycle, shows, the performances of age, however sturdy, are not the performances of youth. They are anaesthetic, for one thing—"God knows what May thought in her heart when she saw him sitting up in his shirt with his nightcap on and the slack skin round his neck ashake." Also, when

January wants May he cannot wait, and when January takes May, something snaps in a body, that should be past this compulsion, and the old husband becomes blind. Enter, unseen, the inevitable cuckold, Dame the young squire. May's moral reasoning behind her adultery is that it is more unnatural for January and May to be bedded together than it is for young lovers to seize their chance. "The Merchant's Tale" is psychologically fascinating because in it Chaucer allows that often the old do possess the capabilities of youth and a zest for living, and also tenderness and warmth, but that none of these things are of value when youth itself is there to supply them.

Some old people are so entirely absorbed in an interest that unites the intellectual and the sensual that time ceases to threaten, question, or mock their actions. When Gilbert White, clergyman and naturalist, made the last entry in his journal in June 1793—"the ground is as hard as iron"—there isn't the faintest forewarning of what was to happen a few days later, when he would be lowered into it. He was just continuing what he had begun twenty-five years earlier with "Horses are still falling with general disorder. It freezes under people's beds." Other than a mention of his getting a bit deaf in his fifties and, on the day before his last entry, that he had been "pulled down" by the "wandering gout," there is no indication of his going on to be seventy-three, a great age for that time. His final letter concludes, "The season with us is unhealthy," and somehow the sentence does suggest that he could have been thinking of something other than the weather, which was bitter, or that he had just heard of Louis XVI's execution. White's old age was that of the old man who is too busy to dwell on it and who, outside a good deal, riding, walking, digging, often wet through and becoming one with plants and birds and climate, gets too tired in the usual way to feel its special weariness.



The obligations
of senility

ge-consciousness comes very early to some men. When the writer and editor John Middleton Murry was sixty, he told a friend, "It's very nice to be old." He was not being facetious. He saw alterations in himself that made him decide to "ac-

passes gracefully in the beginning of the declining curve."

Frank Lea, Middleton Murry's biographer, draws an intriguing picture of this premature and not unwelcome senescence. At twenty-five, he says, Murry had been young for his age, at fifty, old for his years. Even physically he appeared to have shrunk, to have turned small and hard-drawn, like a mummy." The second world war had punctured many of his hopes, and the last of his three wives had wrecked all he understood by what he called "the true man-woman relation." At sixty his face had aged so much that it began to resemble that of his father in his eighties. At sixty-six he said he was "completely unable to remember as a living fact the hydrogen bomb." Gardening brought on an attack of angina pectoris, and he ended saying, "I should not have asked Katherine [Mansfield, his first wife] to go on, I should not have asked Lawrence to go on," as though he had been guilty of wishing a long life on others.

Coleridge, too, experienced an early aging. When he died at sixty-two he was a sorry wreck. In his poetry the old terrify the young. They accost strangers and spoil their day, like Death in medieval experience, who links arms with youth or maiden in broad sunshine. In his "Old Man of the Alps" an aged father stops a traveler to pour out a tale of personal grief just to be pitied—it is "sweet to pity an aged breast." In "The Three Graves"—a poem that enthralled Thomas Hardy—another old man, a sexton, tells a traveler a dreadful story of a thwarted marriage, and in "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" the wedding guest, a man about to participate in one of the major celebrations of human joy, is waylaid by age and its blighting confessions. But in "Limbo" Coleridge insists that when the most vacant senility is preferable to death and the "mere horror of blank Naught-at-all." Better a countenanced old man, "his eyeless face all eye," conscious only of light, his head turned to the moon in order "to gaze at that which seems to gaze on him!" for at least he is still in "human time." Coleridge's old men are Gribouillists, the term given in modern geriatric psychiatry to those who embrace the hideousness of old age and who use it to plague the rest of society.

While Old Age as a principal theme makes up a short list when we compare it with Childhood, its distance as a literary aside is endless. And even the short list is much longer than is generally supposed, for as well as the acknowledged masterpieces, *King Lear*, Cicero's *De Senectute*, Sophocles' *Oedipus at Colonus*, and Swift's appalling tirade, written when he was fifty-five and the most hate-bearing statement on aging that we possess, there is a range of comment

upon and experience of the last years of life that, when we add it up, omits nothing. Aristophanes, in the *Acharnians*, shocks his age-despising, youth-adoring audience by siding with the old. Brecht in *The Unworthy Old Lady* takes a theme similar to Sackville-West's *All Passion Spent* and describes an aged woman refusing to fit into the role that society has created for her and causing consternation by what the world regards as her waywardness—i.e., an insistence on experiment, change, and lack of supervision. In *Endgame*, *Krapp's Last Tape*, and *Happy Days*, Beckett sees the impotence and helplessness of the old as part of that half-appalling, half-comic individual solitude and ineffectuality which can enclose a man at any age. In Dante's *Convivio*, the old are weary, ocean-worn barks making harbor, in Yeats' poems they are incorrigible—"Why should not old men be mad?"—or they have strange remembrances such as gravediggers, "who thrust their buried men back in the human mind again."



truth that can nowadays only be whispered about the old is that they can be boring, cruel, or disgusting, and that they can make the middle-aged ill. If there is a taboo on old age and sex, there is certainly a strong natural and social stricture on what middle-aged children can say when confronted with a decade of geriatric care. The dread that this may happen is often so overwhelming that it begins to eat away at the respect and affection that the children have for their parents long before, or if, they show signs of senility. It is not just a reluctance to take on a burden that causes this corrosion, but the emotional shock and resentment at the reversal of the roles. Many people suffer a kind of indignation when they see what looks like an abdication of parental care in their mother. No longer capable of exercising it, she becomes in effect not entirely their mother. It feels as though she has freed herself from them, but they, in contrast, are imprisoned by her. Even if a parent enters an old people's home, the middle-aged children can still suffer from this strange sense of imprisonment. On the other hand, a son or daughter will care for an aged parent with the utmost devotion and even

find pleasure and fulfillment in this duty, dreading the day of release. But whatever the direction such a relationship takes, it is one of the most difficult to discuss, and we still know too little of the effect of longevity on younger people, who now are having to spend years in close contact with it.

With full-span lives having become the norm, people may need to learn how to be aged as they once had to learn how to be adult. It may become necessary and legitimate to criticize the long years of vapidness in which a healthy, elderly person does little more than eat and play Bingo, or consume excessive amounts of drugs, or expect a self-indulgent stupidity to go unchecked. Just as the old should be convinced that, whatever happens during senescence, they will never suffer exclusion, so they should understand that age does not exempt them from being despicable. To fall into purposelessness is to fall out of all real consideration. Many old people reduce life to such trifling routines that they cause the rest of us to turn away in revulsion. Sometimes we should say to them, "How can you expect us to be interested in this minimal you, with your mean days and little grumbles?" This slide into purposelessness must not be confused with the ability of the old not to take life all that seriously, for this has its virtues and assets. To appreciate the transience of all things is one matter, to narrow the last years—and they can be numerous—down to a dreary thread is another. One of the most dreadful sights in the country of the old is that of the long rows of women playing the Las Vegas slot machines. Had Dante heard of it he would have cleared a space for it in Hell.

Proust illustrated how even the limited movement and interests of extreme old age could enliven the day. Few dramas can be as minuscule as Aunt Léonie's in *Swann's Way*, yet hers remains tiny without being trivial. This ancient woman has turned her small obsessions to good account and has made some of the less admirable foibles of old age—hypochondria, domestic tyranny, nosiness, et cetera—into something life-supporting not only for herself but for her family and the neighbors. Aunt Léonie is a trial, but she isn't a bore. She sits behind a curtain and spies on the town, sips Vichy water, and uses her prayer book like a drill manual. Her sayings and doings are collected and prized, like the first words of a baby. Nobody thinks it is a pity that Aunt Léonie isn't either younger or dead. She is as much enfranchised to make what she can of life in her eighties as she was when she was eighteen, and she doesn't need to conceal her eccentricities any more than a child does.

Few writers in the past needed to consider the dangers and blessings of being pensioned off, or its effect on a previously work-regulated life, because

such things hardly ever occurred. Charles Lamb in *The Superannuated Man* is able to deal with such a subject as a novelty. Even so, his picture has an accuracy that is relevant to contemporary retirement. He tells of a fifty-year-old clerk who has worked in Mincing Lane countinghouse since he was fourteen and who is beginning to show signs of physical collapse. The clerk has averaged a ten-hour day, six days a week, for thirty-six years, working mostly by candlelight and, like "animals in cages," had grown doggedly content. It is only when he starts to disintegrate that the clerk realizes that the routine break from this dim treadmill—Sundays, Christmas, and an annual week in the country—have neither refreshed nor restored him. On the contrary, Sabbatarianism has introduced a repressive "weight in the air" that has actually stopped him from enjoying himself. As for his week of holiday in the country, no sooner has he begun to relax there than it is time to get back to the city. The reader can contrast a future prospect of excessive leisure with a time when it was minimal.

One day the clerk's employers summon him for what he thinks is the sack, being conscious that his work is not what it used to be and that, try as he will, he cannot get back to his old standards. Instead, to his amazement, he is retired on two-thirds of his wages out of gratitude for his past achievements. His feelings are mixed. He is "stunned, overwhelmed," and he wonders about idly "thinking I was happy and knowing that I was not," and realizes that "I had more time on my hands than I could ever manage." He warns others of his fate and tells them not to retire all at once, as the sharp switch from a work routine to no routine is dangerous. Although he knows that walking the city in work-time and feeling the sun and not candles should be paradisaical, he uncomfortably compares "the change in my condition to passing into another world." Soon the fifty-year-old clerk turns into the unneeded, unnecessary man we see on the public seats in parks and libraries today. "I am no longer clerk to the Firm etc. I am Retired Leisure. I am to be met with in trim gardens. I am already come to be known by my vacant face and careless gesture, perambulating at no fixed pace, nor with any settled purpose. I walk about; not to and from." This chilling Beckett-like confession comes only after the work-denied man has paid his conventional tribute to the retired state. It includes the ironic statement that "Had I a little son, I would christen him Nothing-To-Do; he should do nothing. Man, I verily believe, is out of his element as long as he is operative." Charles Lamb, an office worker all his life, is listening to the corporate sigh of that vast army of nineteenth-century clerks, chained from school to grave to their ledgers, who cannot imagine



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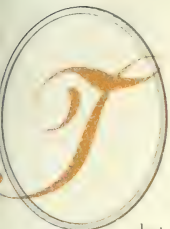
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Literature is also full of examples of old people who are the victims of transience. Having been part of a great political or artistic or scientific upheaval, they realize that they are no longer in the avant-garde only when, in advancing years, they sense a solitude and a silence and, looking around, see that they are alone. It is a strange thing to be left behind by later generations whose moral or material advance is the result of the heart-and-soul battles of one's youth. And stranger still to be battling on when the cause has been won and forgotten. Worse, to find that although the cause was a correct one, and of benefit to oneself and to the world, it is now slotted into the general orthodoxy with no very great addition to the sum of human happiness.

Wells, Dickens, Tolstoy, Ionesco, Colette, Michelangelo, Gide, Maugham, Hemingway, Milton, Eliot, and so on—the list is present wherever and at whatever period one looks—have all said something about age. But the subject has a way of being fugitive, of being little-seen even where it is profusely represented, as it is in Philip Larkin's *Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse*, for example, where there is a startling range of old-age poetry.

Old age is full of death and full of life. It is a terrible achievement and it is a disaster. It transcends desire and it taunts it. It is long enough and it is shorter than being long enough, as the poet Ruth Fainlight says in "Losers":

*Assume nothing at all.
Even to hope you might live for ever
Brings the end too close.*



The conspiracy of extremes

That direct stare which passes between the young and the old is high up among the classic confrontations. It prefaces one of the great dialogues of opposites, and contains a frank admission of helplessness on either side, for nothing can be done to blot out the detail of what has been, or block in the detail of what is to come. On the one side is the clean sheet and on the other the crammed page, although the aged man knows only too well that youth isn't pristine and that some of the ugliest marks to be found on the



record were made then. As young and old survey each other, there is no envy and little envy respectively. The young do not want to be old, nor do they entirely believe that they ever could be, and the old, generally speaking, do not wish to be young. Once through the gamut of time is enough for most. What usually occurs is that an aged man finds life surprisingly sweet still and desires more agedness, but not a full repeat trip.

The young and the old are also sympathetically linked by their common awareness of the burdensome nature of life, because being strong, and facing the prospect before us, can be as daunting as being weak, and facing the end of the road. In one respect, however, the old have the advantage, for with agedness comes an amazing recall of the talk and actions of youth—exquisite, painful, shaming, triumphant, or whatever. The busy decades of work, parenthood, and adult drives of all kinds promise to have obliterated these immaturities, and one of the shocks and sensations of old age is the completeness of their recovery. If the young could understand the intensity of this recall it would be enough to make them deliberately do things worth the recalling, a kind of burying of spring's trophies to be dug up for nourishment in the winter. So the main difference in the confrontation is that the young do not realize that they are accumulating the memories that in old age will often enough, alone, make them interesting and tolerable to youth. For it is a bitterness—one that no amount of common sense can lessen—that memories are about the only thing youth will want from age.

There are further linkings. The young and the old protest and grouse. Not much protesting goes on during our lengthy middle period. It is all at the start and finish, and it is caused first by our caring for more and more, and getting our ideals dragged down into the possible, and second, as Auden put it, via self-disgust, thinning blood, and nipped vision, by finding ourselves caring less about more and more. To be forced into either state by one's age is agony and guilt. And so the aged and the young protest from their different states of impotence, and out of great passions for which those in middle life on their more pragmatic levels have no use. They protest because they are dead serious in a world that finds them either too young or too old to take seriously. Old age sometimes recovers the seriousness of youth that middle age lost or put aside because of its inconvenience. Similarly, it can also mock the stolidity of the adult-controlled universe. The old challenge authority because they have exercised its pretensions, the young because they cannot believe that they will ever have to.

Physically, the old and the young are less disturbing to each other than either group is to the middle-aged. The aorta may begin to collect, at seven years old, those fat deposits that guarantee the gradual downhill trudge to senescence, but aging is unlikely to shake our confidence for a good half-century beyond this point. It is usually in the mid-fifties that, for the first time, many people hear themselves referred to, or

observe that they are being treated as, old. Curious and unmanageable things can happen then that will become less curious, and thus more manageable, later on. Such as imagining that the demonstrative affection of a twenty-year-old is a sign of desire, when it is actually a sign of kindness allied to an assumption that there is nothing to fear. The middle-aged frequently find themselves—timidly yet compulsively, like tonguing a tooth nerve—measuring their assets against those of youth to see what they have left, and against those of old age to see what has to go. It is often a great deal in both cases. There can be then a spiritual and physical drawing-back from the old, as they possessed some centripetal force to drag the younger young into their slipstream decay. Many sexually attractive men and women in their fifties, and at the height of their careers and intellectual interests, have to disguise their loathing of old people. The repulsion can even extend to hospitals and geriatric institutions, where two different kinds of sensitivity can be seen at work, that of the young doctors and nurses, which is non-self-protective because they cannot conceive that what they are seeing will eventually apply to themselves, and that of the middle-aged which is like the formal decoration covering a hard shield. Youth on the geriatric ward is made to feel supra-wholesome by age's contrasting unwholesomeness. It may tell itself that it, too, will have to come to it, but it does not believe that it will. The middle-aged, on the other hand, find themselves at the source of time contagion, and their compassion is proffered at arm's length. The old do not fear the young, but they are ever conscious of the lengths to which self-preservation in the not-so-young will go, and they frequently fear them.



The most pleasurable and rewarding relationship in old age is that with young grandchildren, prepubertal boys and girls, with all of whom the grandparent can enter into a rich conspiracy of stories, embraces, secrets, bribes, teachings, and even sly battles mounted against mother, school, and cetera. While increasing longevity is causing many more people to retain all four grandparents far into



their adulthood, most adolescents and children have fewer old relations than their Victorian ancestors, many years being accepted as old then. A nineteenth-century child took elderliness as a normal part of his life background, since frequently a considerable number of late-middle-aged relatives, assisted by such things as a growing toothlessness and taboos on cosmetics and hair dyes, displayed to them the undisputed results of being seventy and eighty. Nor would we have associated these ancients specifically with death, as we tend to do our old people, for child mortality then was so inescapable a fact of life that the cradle and the grave were terribly adjacent. Now they are accepted as being as far apart as anything can be in this life, wars and accidents permitting. And modern grandparents, not playing an aged role until the very end, and this when their grandchildren are usually young, have a long stretch of life from birth to well past retirement where death, if thought of at all, is regarded as an anomaly. Thus old age is dreaded because it has become the only *normal* death age, and children, when asked to consider it, find it hard to imagine that it possesses its own special liveliness. Their concern, when it is aroused by humanitarian arguments and social-welfare debates, is directed toward that almost invisible group, the near-dead, in which it is rare for them to discover anyone they know, including their grandparents.

An adolescent finds growing to be like his father desirable, and growing to be like his grandfather deeply incredible. The future has to be some number of years, twenty-one for it to belong to him in any acceptable personal sense. After that, time rolls its wastes before him with such featureless extravagance that even he cannot believe that youth will ever end, let alone life itself. For him an old man is beyond the imaginable future. He has gone as far as he can without ceasing to be, and apart from this feat he is negative. If you go on living and living, you will end up with old age putting you on the spot; the young can recognize this and are intrigued by your predicament. It is not because it could ever be their own. Their compassion is a detached emotion and their acquisitiveness a convention. It will remain a polite form of intimacy for years to come.

"Whom the gods love die young," Menander wrote, a sentiment echoed by the Roman poet Plautus, who saw early death as a divine favor. Contemporary youth in many ways sympathetic to this attitude, more so, perhaps, than any generation of the young has been for centuries. The chief difference is that although they cherish the first part of life as extravagantly as did the Greeks, they don't want to die when it is over. Since the 1950s, youth has become increasingly conscious

of its own specialty and, assisted by many sophisticated industries catering exclusively to its tastes and demands, has formed itself into a multinational club with pitiless rules. Whoever one is, if one is young there is membership. Or, wherever one is and one is *not* young (and those who are know instinctively), there is no getting past the barrier. The young themselves have subdivided their youth into periods, so that to have taken part in some recent but discarded movement, such as flower-power, or to have been associated with a vanished pop-group cult, is to reek of senescence.

Possessing as it does a clock that says that old age for the young is thirty, it is no wonder that youth should think of old age proper simply as an academic disaster. Unlike the Greeks, the young today do not dread this disaster. What they dread most is not being young to the young, that awful day of exclusion when, somehow, they have to go on living outside the perfect category. They are hit badly then. It is a temporary blow, of course, a comparative tragedy. And age remains comparative right up until the end. "She's our baby," says the octogenarian inmate in an old people's home of a seventy-five-year-old, and it isn't quite a joke. The younger woman speaks and behaves more youthfully because of it. "The girls have gone on ahead," remarks an old man of his eighty-year-old wife and her sister, and watching the tall, receding figures one sees them shed decades. The advantage of our times over all others is that, due to modern hygiene, limited work, and incomparably improved health standards, once we no longer qualify for the youth cult we can stay "young" virtually until we are old. Society no longer requires the posture and attitudes of age in a grandparent or in a retired person. But when old age does come after such a protracted period of permitted youthfulness, it is often shocking.



Sweat, thought,
and prayer

The Greeks found any attempt to mitigate the fact of old age by the various agencies of youth tasteless and even blasphemous. But they did wonder what purpose the gods had in mind for inventing such a horror, for it made no sense to men. Euripides said that it was because the gods did not

think like men; if they did they would reward virtue with the gift of a second youth. R. W. Livingstone, in his book *The Greek Genius and Its Meaning to Us*, says that it was not the miseries of old age that worried them so much as the loss of beauty and strength. Plato is almost alone in accepting its mellowness: nearly every other Greek writer attacks it with virulence and abuse, and even Sophocles, in *Oedipus at Colonus*, sinks to the usual execration when the chorus spits at "the final lot of man, even old age, hateful, impotent, unsociable, friendless, wherein all evil of evil dwells." To the ancient poets generally it is "detested," "dismal," "oppressive," et cetera. It is all these things not because it is itself, but because it is not youth. One of Plato's favorite proverbs—he quotes it no less than five times—is "First comes health, second personal beauty, then wealth honestly come by, fourth to be young with one's friends." It was life seen under the brightest light, and only youth could bear it. When youth went, all that made life worth living went with it. The so-called compensations of getting older had no significance.

Plato blames such distress—and much else—on the Greeks' worship of the physical. To be worshipful the physical had to be ideal, i.e., young. An irrational element entered this worship when the physical did what it must in its nature do—decay. Seeing what unhappiness this worship must lead to, Plato shocked his contemporaries by inveighing against the physical itself, whether young or old, as an object of undue concern. Livingstone describes how his vocabulary swept along in "metaphors of detestation" against the body, and was listened to as a great heresy by his circle.

Young or old, the body is the oyster shell of our imprisonment, the fetter in which we are chained, the quack that cheats us. It wastes our time with outcries for food, hampers us with diseases, betrays us to lusts, terrors, phantoms; distracts us into the quest for money, and thereby involves us in disputes, factions, and wars. Even if we are at leisure and betake ourselves to some speculation, the body is always breaking in upon us, causing turmoil and confusion in our inquiries, and so amazing us that we are prevented from seeing the truth.

The metaphysical factor has entered Western consciousness and man as a beautiful animal stops admiring himself in the hard light of morning. He sees his flesh now as grass, green and running before the wind, then sere and falling before the blade. When the drying up is accepted as being no more unnatural than the growing up, the pathetic note is sounded. Livingstone says that Plato destroyed the unity of uncorrupted body and soul that to the early Greeks

was Man because he detected in its golden concept the stain of an alloy. This stain was senescence. And Plato divided the spirit and the flesh. Flesh must always be transient, the spirit need not be. And there was a way to survive, even a way to stay glorious. From this point it could be said that life ceased to be a straight road along which a man walked from dawning morning to loathsome night, and became instead a circle that brought him back to where he set out from. With human life caught up in the immutable rounds of the stars and seasons, youth lost its divinity and old age its anathema. Life's journey came to be seen as that of a piece and, set against the aeonic wheeling of time, years, slight and ephemeral even at its most prolonged. To be eighteen, to be eighty, what was it but to be momentarily whirled into and out of physical existence by time? It was the total existence that provided the vital interest, not any fraction of it.

Hesiod calls the three ages of man sweat, thought, and prayer, none of which will "stay the plague of death, or keep old age away," but all of which will certainly fashion and shape the life-span. For him the "sweat" was not of work but of play—the running track and the stadium. He is saying that there are forms of strenuousness and goals in life other than the physical. We have to win intellectually in middle age and contemplatively in old age. There should be no letup, no part of our living when there is nothing to strive for. At whatever stage, there exists a goal. Distress comes when we continue to aim at early goals. The poet Tyrtaeus, who loved and romanticized war, went so far as to include it among the games in which old men should never participate. He finds it hard to say which is the most indecent, a young man hanging around in the company of old men rather than being in the thick of battle, or finding an old man's body on the battlefield. The old man's courage is admitted, but it does not excuse a basic tastelessness in an action that brings about the contamination of the young heroes with his ancient heroics.

It is, however, youth and middle age that define what is unbecoming conduct in the old, not the old who feel it. Their acceptance of standards of seemliness in areas where, privately and deeply personal, no unseemliness is felt, is one of the major concessions that the aged have to make to society. To the Greeks, in common with all civilizations, demands, of course, that the old never be embarrassing about sex. Mimmermus hopes that he will die before he becomes "an old man hateful to maiden and boy, and fashioned by the gods for their annoy." When one is young it is impossible to imagine that something so acutely overwhelming as sexual desire can be repressed, or to associate an emotion that appears to be the prerogative

youthfulness with senescence. But should there be any manifestation of an old person's not being in full expressive control of these urges, he or she is seen as either dangerous or pathetic, though nastily so in both instances. The old often live half-lives because they know that they would arouse disgust and fear if they attempted to live whole lives. All passion is not necessarily spent at seventy and eighty, but it pays the old to have as though it were. Teenagers tend to be more amused than disgusted (as young and middle-aged people are) by geriatric sexuality, and they will often listen to the courtship reminiscences of sixty or more years ago with a kind of raciness similar to that of the weaker. Elderly people who are prim with their middle-aged children are frequently sexually open in their talk with grandchildren.



he will to live in the old was an even more aberrant notion to the Greeks than that the old should make love, and few of their writers described it. But Anacreon, who lived to be eighty-four, when his teeth were "a ragged row," still did not want to die. He was deep in years but not so hopelessly repelled out of the world as the dead, who were beyond any chance of "scaling the upward track and winning their journey back." Where there was life there was hope. While the conventional view of his countrymen toward the life he spoke of was that it was bitter and revolting, Anacreon asked to be allowed more time to taste it with joy. To want more time is the one thing quite beyond the teenager's comprehension. Here the longings and demands of the old become mysterious to them.

Many old people, however, appear to reach a point and then declare: "This is as far as I will go," or "This is as far as I will let it take me." Like Oedipus, who finds a friend that

*to the gods alone
belongs immunity from death and age;
All else doth all-controlling time confound.
Earth's strength decays, the body's strength decays,
Faith dies, and faithlessness bursts into flower,*

may remind God that they have reached a dangerous

situation and that they are not going to face up to it. Sophocles, who lived to be ninety, made those who outlive their day "redouble all sorrows under the sun" and totter along in a "ruining overflow." Intellectual vigor preserved him from this fate and made him attractive to young friends to the last, one of whom wrote:

*How blessed Sophocles, who, dying old,
Was old in happiness and skill of hand.
Beautiful were his Tragedies, and many;
And beautiful his end, who lived untroubled.*

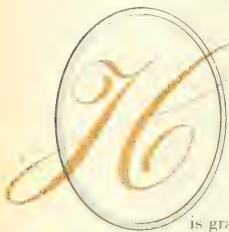
This is among the few positive views of old age to be found in Greek literature. There is a current notion that this active serenity belongs to the wishful thinking of the young and not to the experience of the elderly, but it is less rare than is commonly thought. It usually derives from benefits, balances, and assurances that go far back into an individual's past, and it is not just an eightieth birthday present. Euripides, who reached his seventies, put up a fight against age, which he called woebegone and murderous, by continuing to work. Call this work his swan song if you like, but it will be a sound, he said, that will help his contemporaries to "destroy the beasts of their fear." He is daring: "Old as I am, a swan melodious from the gray down of cheeks to sing." But this bravado does not last, and looking around he has to admit that the old men he knows are nothing but noise and shape, and no



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more than the mimicries of dreams. The poet Pal-ladas, who died at seventy, rejected the accumulation-of-wisdom principle and saw each day as a birth and a death. Many old people—and almost no young persons—accept this.

*From day to day we are born, as each night wanes,
And nothing of our former life remains.
The alien course of yesterday is run;
What life we have this morning is begun.
Say not, old man, that you are rich in age:
Of years gone by you keep no heritage.*



Nature on the verge
of her confines

is grandparents apart, a child's first confrontation with either the powerfulness or the powerlessness of the aged comes in the nursery rhyme and the fairy tale. Here is age as anything but a burned-out condition. Benign or wicked, it is a positive force that the young have to contend with. The negative realities of the old woman—

*And nothing she had,
And so this old woman
was said to be mad.
She'd nothing to eat,
She'd nothing to wear,
She'd nothing to lose,
She'd nothing to fear,
She'd nothing to ask,
She'd nothing to give,
And when she did die,
She'd nothing to leave—*

are rare. The Grimm brothers present age as an enemy in the ferocious stories they collected. Age is vampirish. Its only use for youth is as a source of nourishment to its own strength. In "Hänsel and Gretel" old parents twice expose their children to death because there isn't enough food for themselves and their offspring, and when another old person finds them she intends to sustain herself by devouring their young flesh. In "Faithful John" an old man of acknowledged integrity fixes things so that he can protect his son's life from the tomb. In "Snow-White" an aging beauty wants to murder the loveliness of youth. In the cruelly anti-Semitic "Jew Among Thorns," the old and the rich try to cheat the young and the poor. In "The Six Servants" an old woman works out a system to stop a

young woman from marrying. Most of these evil old people are bested by youth, and in the most hideous manner. Youth stamps them into the ground in revulsion, as it might an infected old rat. In Grimm's payoff for the old is pitiless.

Hans Christian Andersen, on the other hand, introduces some of the most subtle and kindly studies of age in fiction. In his stories the old and the young liars in acts of common preservation, or the old act as guardians to youth, or as magicians when all else fails. The old help the young in order to awaken feeling and responsibility in them. They are pushing them toward emotional maturity. They strike bargains: Love us and we will protect you. The amount of childish involvement in old age in his work is remarkable. In "The Cuckoo" a small boy sees an old man and wonders why anyone gives him kisses. He is told, "Nothing will ever be given to him again except his funeral; he is old." The "Little Match Girl," dying from cold, strikes her last matches, not to warm herself but because her beloved grandmother's face appears briefly in the flame. "The Old Street Lamp" and "The Fir Tree" both deal with discardment. In a strange tale about bachelorhood as a chronic condition, it is the ancient widower who weds the pretty girl rejected by his adolescents. In "The Naughty Boy," an old poet gives a beautiful lad shelter for the night—and receives Cupid's arrow in his heart for his pains. In "Holly and the Dandelion" a great-grandfather is recognized as the repository of patriotism, and is venerated. "The Elder Tree Mother" is one of the greatest allegories of old age—"Some call me Elder-tree mother, and some call me Dryad, but my real name is Memory." In Andersen isn't age itself that receives the respect of the young but decent, dignified age. Wise age. Selfless age. How far Andersen has influenced children's literature is hard to say, but he remains the leader of the storytellers who see a special relationship between the newcomers to the world and those about to leave it. His advice to the elderly is "Learn to be forgotten and yet to live."

One of the most influential of children's authors, Kenneth Grahame, lived the full span with little mental or physical sign of aging at all. He was one of the few people who, when they die, do so as old boys, rather than old men.

At fifty, a friend said, the creator of the immensely influential *The Wind in the Willows* and *The Golden Age* remained "almost beatifically young, with the clear and roseate complexion of a healthy child." Although he was an astute businessman holding an important position in the Bank of England, Grahame retained the wide-eyed, untouched air of an innocent lad who was still under nursery law. This innocent, his biographer states, was initially a deliberate affect.

Grahame's ruins were as real as any man's. He was the world for seventy-three years and they carried plenty enough effluent to contaminate the pure waters of the River Bank, yet he contrived a way of preventing them from doing so. As he aged, Grahame spent increasingly long stretches of his life simply idling. If possible, he became more and more unmarked by what was happening to him, his eyes clearer and his long white moustache more dazzling. Shortly before he died, A. A. Milne scripted *The Wind in the Willows* for the stage, and there was consternation! Milne had, as it were, made the error (blasphemy, they meant) of writing out to please children only. He had taken a look that had begun as a bedtime story told to a child (Grahame's son), and made it into a manifesto for thousands of Grahame's contemporaries on how to stop the clock. His last months were very strange. Although he suffered from high blood pressure, arteriosclerosis, and fatty degeneration of the heart, he talked and walked like a man half his age. He plagued his stingy, nannylike wife for sweets and was always slipping out of the house to buy ice creams. He spent the last afternoon of his life by the river that had inspired a masterpiece that, he said, "was clean of the clash of sex," and he died early the next morning of a cerebral hemorrhage. His gravestone at Oxford says that "he passed the River on 6th July, 1932." It was on a double drift of the Fowey and the Thames, not the Nile or the Jordan, that he floated away, two English streams that had sailed him past the points where the elements of maturity lurked.

Had he deliberately set out to retain his first responses to life—which he did not, for it appears that he was putting in his boyhood was his way of emotional regression—Grahame could have cited some impossible authorities for his decision. He could also have argued that, unlike most men, in his old age he was not regressive, for, not having moved on from the illusions of infancy, idealistically speaking, he did not need to return to them. The child, Simone de Beauvoir says, surpasses the adult by the wealth of its possibilities, the vast range of its acquisitions, and its emotional freshness. The child, Wordsworth says, is a more potent agent because it has not yet entered the prison house of adulthood. So, is it an advancement or a decline when our infinite possibilities shrivel to a mere record of achievements? Here the imaginative writer and the scientific writers are often at odds, although the literature of both eloquently agrees on the superiority of our first sixteen or so years on the earth. It also agrees that we each have something like fifty years' struggling ascent, which gives us growing perspectives and broadening views, before we start shorter descent and have to put up with a gradually restricted scene and, consequently, a diminishing

interest in it. One school suggests that greenness is not rawness but a state of primal vitality that returns as a kind of recollective strength to nourish us in the dryness of old age, the other that ripeness is all. None of us can so plan our lives that they do not mature, because this would require a very unchildlike decision. And so when we very occasionally meet with adults who are "innocent," we know that this is not the innocence of inexperience, or of an applied morality, but a rare endemic quality. Such people know little about either ripeness or greenness. They are grown up in wisdom when a child, and a child when mature. In old age their bodies seem to have had little to do with chronological time, and because their intelligence is still busily and inexhaustibly accepting possibilities, their fantasies are not retrospective. But just as a few of us do not grow down, in Wordsworthian terms, neither does everybody like the notion of maturation. Albert Schweitzer found the word "ripe" applied to a human being depressing.



The very old are constant visitors to a vanished geography, whether of village or town, and are at home in gardens under the concrete carpark and in fields and meadows beneath runways, or in trafficless lanes and streets with strong identities and familiar passing faces below the office blocks. The twentieth-century dead are still within the gift of living recollection. While there is pleasure in this compulsive backward viewing, there is also a comforting sort of misery similar to that which children experience when they hug their own secrets to themselves as they feel the adult world's selfishness and injustice. The old are also not so much nostalgic or contemplative travelers into past time as moths being dragged back over and over again to what has come to mean their real incandescence. Age is a great all-over dulling of body and spirit, and men and women find escape routes from the cumbersome grayness to the days when they leaped and shone. But often the intensity of nonstop remembrance is not refreshing. It exhausts; one old lady I spoke with longed for a visitor to "stop my thoughts of my life going around and around, and wearing me out. . . . You get very sick of 'me' when you're my age. I daresay that that's the worst

of being old, having all this 'me' in your head!"

One of the fearful developments in the consciousness of many old people is that, in the eyes of society, they have become another species. Ironically, an intensive caring and concern for their welfare is frequently more likely to suggest this relegation than indifference and neglect. The growing bureaucracy—amateur and professional, voluntary and state—for dealing with geriatrics makes some old folk feel that they no longer *quite* belong to the human race. They want those who really knew them as fully operative human beings to speak up for them, to tell these efficient planners who appear to be corralling them off from the other generations who they really are. Then they recall that the teacher, the employer, the priest, the neighbor, the lover, and "Mr. So-and-so with whom I dealt for forty-two years" are all dead, and that *nobody* knows them as they were. Children are frankly concerned. Or frankly horrified. Nor, like Charles Dickens, can the old see any evidence of a second childhood in senility. "It is a poor, hollow simulacrum of it, as death is a simulacrum of sleep," Dickens wrote. "Where in the eyes of a senile man is the light and vivacity that laugh in the eyes of a child? . . .

Flash at that emptiness which blots the happy ending of our life by giving its name to this horrible and painful limitation."

In Dickens the old are extremely alarming figures and the young are rewarded if they don't fly from them or avoid them, or aren't rude to them. Dickens obliges his boys and girls to stand fast before the Gorgon of influential geriatrics. He never asks them to understand old age, only to let it meddle, usually in so labyrinthine manner, in their future lives. His old people are sentimental grotesques with a wide-range power still, and a faint unease runs through even the most benign of his old person-infant relationships. His old people, good and bad alike, flaunt their incomprehensibility before the young. "There is no other way what we have become," is their message. The young today see a mainly powerless old person and hear the *opassness* that enters on the subject about the economic consequences of this powerlessness. An old man is full of warnings, not promise, and would like to tell his grandson about life, but he finds that he can never get very far without getting stuck in his own life, which is not what he meant. Always, always, it piped to him from afar and his present quarter-alive self goes to meet it with all the imaginative strength it can muster. This long-ago childhood at first appears to him as amazingly accurate in all its detail. It is only when he begins to relate it to the boy who, so curiously, is wearing his expression and whose eyes and hair are his own made new again, that the accuracy crumbles, and stories emerge that, although truths, are at the same time a travesty of his experience.

The old are only marginally interested in the talk of the young. The effort to listen to future-oriented talk is strenuous. Great emotional indulgence, politeness, or a need to be wanted will produce an attentive ear for a short while. Then comes the exhaustion and confusion about upon knowing that one had possessed once, all that creativity—and where had it got off to? *Faculty* doesn't want to listen to children, it wants to tell it things. "We want," John Cowper Powys wrote

of course in a general way to make a favourable impression and to be admired and liked, but in the heat and excitement of the moment the universal craving to be admired has just simply to be heard, which we complain and explain, confess and accuse, narrate and recall, soon sweeps away—at least till afterwards—all morning speculation as to the impression produced by our monologue on the other person. Only to be heard! Only to fill the whole stage for one blessed interval!

It could be that the young, who are great cravers, have a special sympathy with a final craving to have one say. And that is the bond.

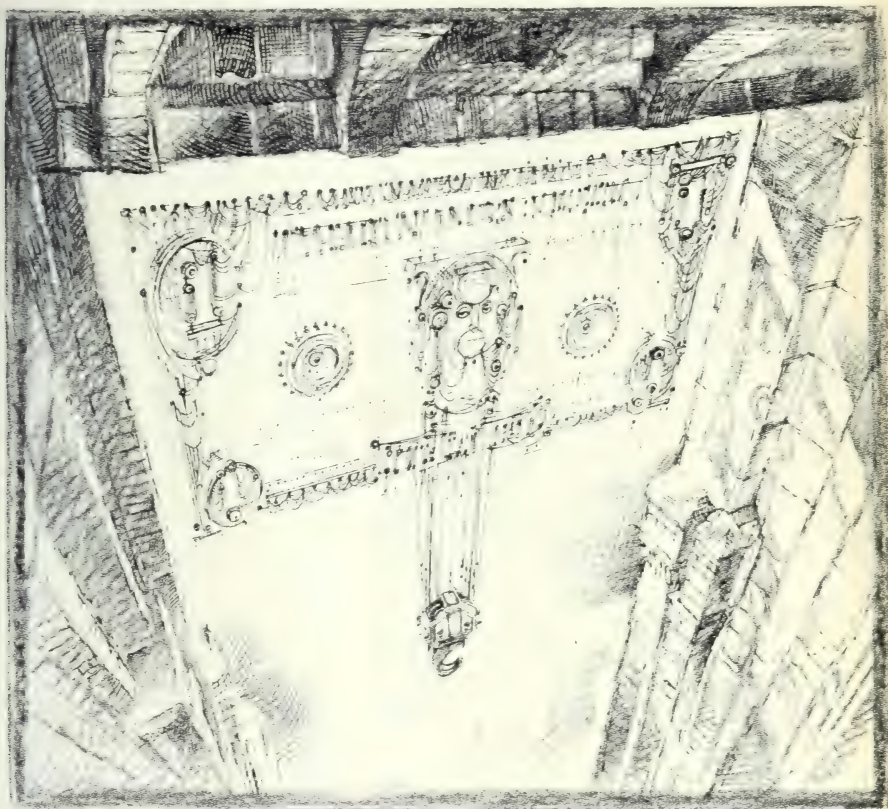


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OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL

by David Suter

LEVERAGE



Work, the simple product of force and distance, is an idea we owe to the Alexandrian romantic Archimedes, who claimed that with a lever and a place to stand he could move the earth. Actually, calculation shows that for such a lever to move the planet even a centimeter it would have to have arms in the ratio 10^{23} :1 and be pushed through an arc of 10^{18} kilometers—an effort that would have taken Archimedes about 10^{21} years, even supposing that a material strong enough for his lever could be found.

Now consider the legacy of this romance. Long ago we condensed his lever to a series of pulley

blocks, preserving its mechanical advantage. Given enough falls of rope, our machine, we thought, could indeed lift the earth some sensible distance, doing “work” in the process.

Thus it has been possible, from time to time, to see this construction moving across the world like a shrouded catafalque, experimentally moored over European capitals, a rooftop in Taiwan, a South American copper mine. Sadly, we find the earth has not really budged at all; instead, the device, lightened by wear and “cost-push” inflation, has begun to lift itself out of sight.

IN THE ABYSS

A short story

by Gilbert Rogin

IN THE PREFACE to *The Tragic Muse*, Henry James says that all we see of the artist in triumph "is the back he turns to us as he bends over his work." But what is our view of him in anything less than that state?

Albert lubricates the male ferrule with sebum from the side of his nose, and puts his spinning rod together. He fits the reel foot into the rod seat, twists the retainer rings and screws them down tight. Then he strips out the seventeen-pound test mono, gently threads it through the guides, and checks the line for frays and nicks. He slips the line through a one-ounce egg sinker and the eye of a snap swivel, twists it five times, passes it through the loop formed by the first twist, and draws it tight. Next he opens the swivel and slips the snell loop of a wire-snelled 7/0 long-shank bluefish hook into the swivel and snaps it shut. He fixes the hook in an envelope upon which "Compliments of Mr. Al E. Mohny" is written and goes to his bedroom window. Opening the bail, he lowers the rig into the garden three stories below, where Violet, his ex-wife, is sitting with Skippy Mountjoy, her first ex-husband.

Paying out the line, Albert reflects on the contingencies awaiting all of us. For example, having recently purchased his first pair of reading glasses, he discovered the other night that he had inadvertently worn them while masturbating.

WHEN SHE HAS CALMED DOWN, the Human Dynamo, Albert's twenty-eight-year-old girlfriend, declares that the only conceivable reason Albert told Violet the garden apartment was available was that he had run out of material. She tells this to him on the telephone toward the end of a long, heroic, even Wagnerian conversation. Because the Human Dynamo lives in New Canaan and Albert in New York, they talk on the phone nearly every night, largely about what she had for dinner and whether he needs to bring bread.

In the winter, Albert visits the Human Dy-

namo Wednesdays, because she skis weekends; in the summer, he visits her Saturdays because on weekdays she plays tennis all work until it is too dark to see the ball. When he tells her their relationship is absurd, she says, "Why don't you take up tennis [or skiing], so we could have fun together?" Do you know Donatello's *Dead Christ with Angels*? One of the piteous, attending cherubs has clapped a chubby hand to its cheek—nowadays, curiously, a gesture associated with Jewish people, as the Human Dynamo calls us. This Albert's attitude when he is told he should take up tennis (or skiing) at forty-six.

Because the Human Dynamo doesn't eat bread, she considers it extravagant to buy a whole loaf so Albert can have toast for breakfast on Thursday (winter) or Sunday (summer). If she goes to her parents for dinner, she filches a slice for him; otherwise, he has to bring one with him on the train, wrapping it in foil and slipping it into his jacket pocket.

Like other clandestine acts, carrying a concealed slice of bread is to a degree thrilling and invests the bearer with a sense of mission, self-importance, and romance. Returning to his office from the Y one Wednesday afternoon, Albert reckons he may be the only person walking the streets of New York with a slice of Sprouted Wheat in his pocket. Chances are that at that very moment more bombs are being conveyed in this fashion, and with the terrorist, Albert shares the unendurable need to let someone in on the secret.

"Excuse me, sir. Perhaps you've noticed this slight bulge in my pocket. Pat it for a moment and see if you can guess what I have here?"

"A paperback?"

"No."

"An eight-track of the Grateful Dead?"

"Uh-uh."

"A very small ant farm?"

When Albert informs the Human Dynamo that as a consequence of reminding him to bring bread or, for example, asking him to solve such moral dilemmas as whether he has the right to insist that Kurt, a BMW dealer,

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former beau with whom she is dickering a new car, throw in cocoa mats, his phone bills are averaging more than \$100 a month, she says, "I'm worth it. You give her \$500 a month."

ALBERT ALSO GIVES VIOLET his dying quince. Unlike the alimony checks, he doesn't lower the branches from his window on fishing line, but carefully carries them downstairs, avoiding the inkier system, as though he were participating in a multilevel production of *Macbeth*, so they won't shed petals all over the runner. Violet has told him she can't afford fresh flowers because her lawyer let Albert's lawyer—her father, her ex-father-in-law—put one over not taking into account the fact that she has to pay taxes on her alimony, so that instead of getting \$500 a month, she only gets \$283.33. Whatever, Albert recalls that when he was married to her, the apartment would be full of ribund chrysanthemums and asters standing in dark, faintly fetid water. Albert often wondered why she didn't get rid of them.

Was it because of neglect or because of a yearning for the wild, rank, and tangled associated with her rural upbringing? "Willows, rotten planks, slimy posts and brickwork love such things," Constable was another fanfcier.

Once Albert threw out several boughs that were so ancient they had come to resemble elders, being covered with a velvetlike growth. When Violet learned what he had done, she burst into tears; the branches were from the magnolia that grew beside the house in which she had been born, and she had broken them for a memento when it was put up for sale. Their marriage had been characterized by sensational episodes, as had that of her parents. Following Violet's appearance on the coffee table, upon which stage her nine old brothers and sisters had previously made their entrances, the midwife, piqued that Violet's father had been so heedless as to make his wife suffer through ten pregnancies one after the other, thrust the afterbirth at him, which he flung in the fireplace. Albert tried to imagine what his father's reaction would have been if he had been handed Albert's afterbirth.

To make up for putting the magnolia down the incinerator, Albert bought Violet a print of a sprig of small magnolia, or white bay, which now hangs with other floral prints above the bed. Whenever Albert comes bearing his dying quince—or, at other seasons, forsythia, weeping wood, pendulous, ashen lilacs—and puts

the branches in a vase by her fireplace, Scotch-taping them to the mantelpiece so they won't tip the vase over, he notices anew that the prints are hanging crooked. This disarray is especially poignant. When he and Violet were married, he kept the pictures straight; now their obliquity seems to him symbolic of her inability to cope without him and gives rise to tender sentiments, though she might very well be unaware that the prints are dazzlingly crooked, considering rectitude unimportant.

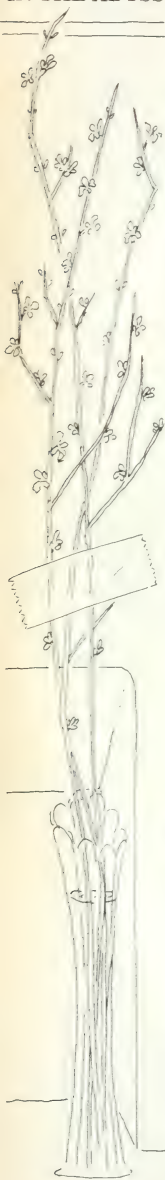
This last reflection gives Albert pause. He visualizes himself going critically about his apartment, nudging prints of walruses, flounders, and orioles into line; making sure the telephone sits squarely on the telephone table, but a little off center to improve the composition; and arranging the overlapping magazines on the coffee table so that they describe a gentle, jagged arc. In the right angles he recognizes his father's influence, in the curves his mother's.

During the eleven years of his marriage, Albert tried to instill in his stepchildren this sense of order and fitness, this artistic vision, if you will. He believed he had failed, as he had in inculcating his store of practical and moral precepts, until the other evening when his twenty-three-year-old stepdaughter came to dinner. While waiting for her ice cream "to turn to mush," she wandered about the living room. "Your dictionary is open to *P*," she suddenly announced. Although her tone was gloating, Albert had the impulse to take her in his arms. How many times had he told her and her brother to leave the dictionary open to *M* after looking something up? *It had sunk in!* Solicitously kneading her ice cream with a table-spoon, which keeps getting bent out of shape, so that he has to keep straightening it (surely a parallel can be drawn with the examined life), Albert recalls his father's explanation, which he had automatically passed on—what did he know of physics?—that the spine would be ruined if the dictionary was left open to any letter other than *M*, especially those at the beginning or end of the alphabet. *Ruined!* How often his father had invoked that fate, whether in respect to Albert's posture as a result of slouching about all over the place, or to the chairs he insisted on tipping back at the dinner table, or to his parents' reputation as a consequence of fondling his silverware: "If you fondle it here where Mother and I can overlook it or forgive you because you're our son, you'll fondle it when you're dining out where it will reflect falsely on your rearing."

Albert goes over to the dictionary and clutches it with both hands, his left thumb on the page headed *Mainstay*, his right on the



Barbara Neslin



one headed *Make*, the fingers of his left hand on *Collegium*, those of his right on *Tortive*, as though passionately grasping two hanks of hair to force a lover's head closer, or, as he had done years ago, to fling his disobedient stepdaughter from him.

Albert stands before the dictionary, shaking it, as if once and for all to put his father's theory to the test or to punish the words, to scatter them into unintelligibility for failing to serve him, for not bending to his will—or to express his ardor for them.

It has been said that words are stones, compact and uncompromising, picked up from civilization's communal rubble, hacked out of its great, repetitive designs; it has been said that words are bright, lightly tossing buoys, marking definitions lying far below. In the first case, writing is like building a wall, in the second, it is a series of deep, baffling dives. And it has been said (by Jung) that words butter no parsnips.

"What are you doing?" Albert's stepdaughter says apprehensively.

What is he doing? Albert releases his hold and smooths out the pages, as though the dictionary were a pillow upon which he would later gratefully lay his head.

BUT I LEFT ALBERT fishing from the window. Surely no angler will have better luck. It is gusty, darkening, early spring. The air through which the white envelope—addressor, Mr. Al E. Mohny—flutters down is palest lavender, the color, Albert recalls from his life with Violet, that cornflowers turn if they're not thrown out. She and Skippy are seated at a glass-topped table, in which overarching California privet is reflected, the images of the tossing branches more tempestuous than their actual counterparts, either because they are concentrated, like a stormy sea funneled against rocks, or because an image is in a sense art, which heightens. Drinking iced tea, Violet and Skippy are unaware of the descending envelope, now hovering ominously a few feet above their heads.

As Skippy begins laughing—immoderate laughter that from time to time awakens Albert in the middle of the night—the telephone rings. Albert turns the reel handle to snap the bail shut, lays the rod on the floor, and answers the phone. It's the Human Dynamo, who left the courts early on account of the wind. "Should I name my car Yogurt?" she says.

She explains that she is going to register her new BMW in Vermont so she won't have to pay the local property tax, and is thinking of getting vanity plates.

"It can't be more than six characters."

"Have you considered anything else?"

"Sundae, Banana, Raisin, Gopher, Muffin."

"Does it have to be comestible or small furry?"

"Squeak, Oh Wow, Breezy. What do you think, Albie?"

"I think we ought to get a WATS line."

"No, really."

"I really think you should call it Virtue."

"ter your age."

"Huh?"

"The ancients regarded twenty-eight as a perfect number because it equals the sum of all its divisors and therefore signifies virtue. I think a good many motorists would find it uplifting."

"Do you think you're too old for me?"

"I think I'm too old for myself," Albert says, imagining driving along the South Duxbury Highway in the prolonged summer twilight, his plates emblazoned MISERY OR CRISIS OR ROW.

After he's hung up, Albert returns to the window and begins reeling in. By then it is dark, the wind has died; Violet and Skippy are either sitting quietly under the privet or have gone inside. Albert has the impression that while he was on the phone, line had been taken out and that he is fishing in an abandoned pond. What had he expected to catch? To what could he put a fragment of the past? Aunt Aubrey wrote of seeing a mower using an arm off a monument of a lord in a ruined abbey near to whet his scythe.

"While preparing my income tax," Albert's father, who is eighty, says, "I was made aware of a haunting fragrance."

"I think 'haunting' is too theatrical for a fragrance," Albert's mother says, biting into a broccoli. "Jasmine. Frangipani—"

"I think 'was made' is too literary, particularly for the Upper West Side," Albert says. "What's wrong with 'became'? I became aware—"

"I have become aware that I am surrounded by *petits stinquer*," his father says, frowning, his habit in a tight spot.

Albert is having dinner at his parents' when he does every Friday.

"At any rate," his father goes on, "the fragrance unexpectedly wafted across my calculations. I looked up, puzzled. It was—" He indicates the daisies, which, with an arrangement of gourds, make up the centerpiece. "It was evocative."

Albert waits for him to say of what, but his father's lips are compressed. He turns to his mother to see if there is a secret and she shakes her head. She, too, is looking at him expectantly.

et detects that she is on the verge of smiling, but is unsure whether it would be appropriate. In the moments in which his father apparently dwelling on the evocation the of daisies gave rise to and his mother evidently trying to again come to terms with the fact that the man to whom she has been married for more than fifty years has memories of idyllic interludes from which she is never excluded, Albert recalls reeling in his until the bare hook appeared above the

Jake's coming back," he announces to change the subject.

"Jake?" his mother says.

"Josh's litter brother," Albert says.

"They're those dogs," his father says to his other.

Shortly after they were married, Albert and Jake had bought two dachshund puppies, one named Jake. When they were four, Jake indicably began attacking Josh. Albert and Jake decided they would have to separate the two, and advertised to find a new home for Jake. The ad was answered by a childless couple named White. Albert took Jake in a taxi to their apartment in the West Eighties, in which rows of nearly identical cacti were set out beneath indistinct landscapes featuring rose-colored cows. Albert showed Mr. White, a short man with a frequent, perhaps facetious laugh, to Josh Jake's ears; he hadn't seen him before. Josh now lived with Violet. In the morning when Albert went for the *Times*, he took Jake along, forgotten down by his ankles; when he delivered his withering bouquets, he would dandle him on his knees, like the infant he never had, contemplating the graying muzzles of posterous in this context, scarred by the teeth: part dog, part child, part god.

"I began to have pangs," Albert tells his parents. "I felt I had cast Jake out of my life, as if I had disposed of him. I wanted to see him again before he died. I called the Whites up. Dialing, I had a premonition I would be too late. Mr. White answered. 'How's that 'tittle doggie' after all these years?' I said, 'He's fine,' and said, 'He was a great comfort to Mr. White for the end.' It turned out the 'tittle hubbie' had died three years ago. I didn't know what to do. I was entranced by the irony. The upshot was he's going to Corfu for ten days and would be delighted to have Jake visit me while she's away."

For the life of me, I don't know why you got out of your way to encumber yourself," his mother says.

You persist in dwelling in the past," his father says.

Installing Violet right under your feet,"

his mother says. "How are you ever to go forward?"

"I seem to be swept along," Albert says. "I'm going to be in *Who's Who*."

"In the East?" his father says. "I'm in the East. *Who's Who in the East*. I've been in there for ages."

"In America," Albert says, feeling it may be an uncharitable remark.

"I'm in the morgue," his father says.

"I'm in the morgue, too," his mother says.

Albert envisages the two slim manila envelopes of brittle, yellowing clippings nestled side by side in a filing cabinet, closer than their subjects are in life.

"I'm clearing the decks," Albert's father says abruptly, rising, as though realizing that in weighing his accomplishments he had kept his thumb on the scale and that there is no time to lose if he wants to swell his envelope. He begins scooping up plates.

"I'll do it," Albert's mother says, also rising.

They face each other warily across the littered table like wrestlers before a match.

"I'm restoring some order," his father says.

"You're terrible," his mother says.

"You're the second person who's called me that today."

"Who was the first?" she says.

"Albert's Violet."

"I never—"

"I was riding the down escalator at the bank, when I noticed her rising toward me on the up escalator. I greeted her. 'You're a terrible man,' she said."

"I never—"

"I wanted to ask her what she meant, but we were rapidly drawing apart. When I reached the bottom I got on the up escalator. When I reached the top she had vanished. Albert, do you have any idea what she meant?"

"The tax on the alimony, probably."

"But she was represented."

"I never—"

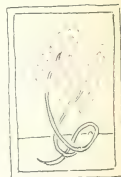
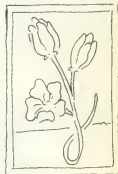
"Please sit down," Albert says. "I'm going to clear the table."

"Do you think I'm terrible?" his father asks, slowly lowering himself, reaching behind with one hand, as though uncertain whether his chair might have been whisked away, that his life might have turned out to be some sort of practical joke.

"Violet tends to divide people into friendlies and hostiles," Albert says. "I believe it has to do with coming from a large family where you had to fight for a hind teat." Once again he imagines his father, a young man not unlike himself at thirty-three, but appalled, not knowing what to do with Albert's afterbirth.

"It's not your father's fault that she didn't

"Albert thinks of himself as a balloon, whose mooring lines are being cast off one by one. . . ."



have better representation," Albert's mother says.

Albert collects the teacups and heads for the kitchen.

"Don't dispose of the lemon," his father sings out. "There are one or two squeezes left."

"Why don't you take more dishes with you?" his mother calls after him. "Then you won't have to make so many trips."

Pushing open the swinging door, Albert thinks: But I want to keep going back and forth; that way I can postpone whatever is going to happen next: e.g., that the last of the argyle socks Violet bought him during the course of their marriage would get a hole in it and he would have to throw it out. Albert thinks of himself as a balloon, whose mooring lines are being cast off one by one, so that one day he will unexpectedly, fearfully, state-ly rise.

RETURNING from his parents, Albert runs into Skippy Mountjoy walking Josh.

"What was the blue-plate special tonight?" Skippy asks, falling in alongside him. "Roast capon or brisket?"

"Know my every move, don't you, Skippy?"

"Josh clues me. Dog's very deep. Ver-ry deep. Ver-ry 'tittle gets by 'tittle Josh. Fridays Mom and Dad, Saturdays Human Dynamo, except in the winter when it's Wednesdays and the Knicks are Saturdays, as well as Tuesdays, when they're at home. Josh tells me Jake's coming for a visit. Think they'll mix it up?"

"No. Jake was always the aggressor. I'm convinced it had to do with territory. Josh never had a sense of territory. Besides, the territory no longer exists."

"Care to draw any parallels vis-à-vis you, me, and Violet?"

"Only if you do, Skippy."

"Oh, no, I pass. Never touch the stuff. More in your line—analogizing, metaphorizing. No izing on my cake. Right, Josh? Dog's got unimagined depths. You, you've got imagined depths. Right, Albie? Surface another story."

They pass beneath the sycamores that border the sidewalk at intervals, treading on the fretted shadows of their foliage. Albert has the impression the shadows are duckweed and that they are walking on water.

"What do you mean?"

"You're in a rut."

"I'm not in a rut, Skippy. I lead a contrived life."

"V-8, tschav, three-quarters of a pound of ground round, Sprouted Wheat, and applesauce every night is a poor contrivance, then.

Allow me to give you my recipe for red court bouillon."

They have reached the gate to the steps leading to Violet's apartment. Skippy unlatches it and Josh bounds down. Albert turns to climb the stoop. Taking out his keys he tells Skippy, "Send it up on the line soon, time."

As he approaches his landing, Albert hears his telephone ringing. He pounds up the maining stairs, unlocks the door, and runs to the phone.

"It's me." It's the Human Dynamo.

"Yes, what is it?" Albert says, out of breath.

"Oh, Albert, a bird pooped on my new car."

When he gets into bed, he puts on his glasses, but doesn't read. Instead, he wonders whether by nature the contrived life precludes what were once called "the good parts"; e.g., "This book has a lot of good parts" or "I don't know if you get to the good parts yet?" If he put a quarter in a Times Square peep show, inevitably an innocuous segment of the loop would appear; a blonde and a brunette in a convertible driving along a palm-lined street, making li-mous as they try to find the house where the mixed foursome will take place. Albert is most convinced that no matter how many quarters he spends, he will never get to see the good parts, that in episode after episode the girls will continue to circle through the streets becoming more and more fretful—the act here godawful—at their inability to find the right address, that it will gradually become dark, the lights come on, the girls' eyes, convertible gleaming lustrously beneath the palms....

Albert takes off his glasses and folds his earpieces. They make two little clicks when they strike the frames. Albert is charmed by the sound. What a satisfactory way to denote the conclusion of yet another day, like the conclusion of a remote sunset gun. To think that until recently his days ended unceremoniously. In a sense, these minute, faintly melancholy salutes constitute good parts, too, he supposes.

Several hours later, Albert's bedroom opens. The light from the landing discloses a little boy of two or so. He is wearing a brown veteran suit. A spray of quince and leather fern is pinned to his lapel. He makes a hieroglyphic sign. "Behold," he says, "I show you a martyr." As he totters toward the bed, Albert sees that his eyes are red, glowing, like a dog in a flash photograph.

"Jakie!"

Extending his arms, Albert recalls walking with him and Josh, how they vibrantly anchored him to the ground, gave him a sense of place and intention.

'I didn't sacrifice great flavor to get low tar.'

"The first thing I expect from a cigarette is flavor. And satisfaction. Finding that in a low-tar smoke wasn't easy.

"But then I tried Vantage. Frankly, I didn't even know Vantage was low in tar. Not until I looked at the numbers.

"That's because the taste was so remarkable it stood up to anything I'd ever smoked.

"For me, switching to Vantage was an easy move to make. I didn't have to sacrifice a thing."

Peter Accetta

Peter Accetta
New York City, New York



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The next morning, Albert is awakened by the phone.

"It's me." It's Violet.

"Yes, what is it?"

"Oh, Albert, a squirrel's eating my baby's breath."

IT HAS BEEN SAID that the greatest single discovery in the history of thought is the invention of a symbol for nought," Albert says. He is sitting at Violet's desk, writing out her alimony check. "It would make a nice couplet, if I worked at it."

"We would've made a nice couple if you had worked at it," Violet says, Scotch-taping to her mantelpiece the quince he brought downstairs. She steps back to examine her handiwork. As if on cue, a few pink petals flutter pathetically to the hearth. "And if it's such a great invention, why don't you add another to the check?"

"I hear you passed my father on an escalator and called him a terrible man," Albert says, taking off his shoes and climbing up on Violet's bed.

"Because he is."

Albert straightens the floral prints above her pillows, then begins jumping up and down on the bed.

"Violet, do I look like a high-bouncing ex-lover?"

"You look like someone who has shafted me."

"I'll set up an appointment for you with my accountant. Maybe he can scheme up some deductions."

"Timmmberrrr!" Violet cries.

On the way up, Albert sees the Scotch tape ripping loose, the quince going over. He springs off the bed, catching the branches before they bring the vase down. The last of the blossoms litter the hearth.

"In a drear-nighted December," Albert quotes, picking them up, "'Too happy, happy tree/ Thy branches ne'er remember/ Their green felicity.' I have to go."

"It's Saturday, isn't it?"

"I'm catching the 5:05."

"Don't go. When you're here, I think of you up there. It's like you're sitting on my head. When you're away, I have no top."

"But it's Saturday."

He backs toward the door, the blossoms filling his cupped palms, not knowing where to put them.

"Albert." Violet says, holding out her hands. "why don't you take up bowling so we could have fun together?"

He gently tips the petals into her hands.

Albert hears the telephone ringing as he climbs the stairs.

"It's me." It's the Human Dynamo. Sobbing.

"What's wrong?"

"The form came from the Vermont Motor Vehicle Bureau."

"And—"

"And Albie, it says you're only allowed to have five characters."

"And—"

"And all I can think of is Peach. I had several good names for my car."

"We'll discuss it at dinner."

"Don't forget to bring bread."

On the 5:05 he reenvisages the South Duxbury Highway at twilight. This time his plates begin to ENNUY, GUILT. A few miles beyond Port Clinton, the train comes to a halt. Five or ten minutes pass and there is still no announcement about pantographs or stalled trains ahead. Then the doors slide open. Several passengers disembark. Albert among them, jump to the ground and walk forward along the roadbed. It is a moon-clear evening. The engineer and the conductors are standing in front of the head car, looking down. Joining them, Albert sees them at the rim of a vast abyss. Its interior is largely in shadow, the very depths filled with a fishy haze out of which protrude vividly colored eminences of sandstone and shale suggest minarets, turrets, steeples, spires. Albert pictures the Human Dynamo waiting forlornly at the station in her new BMW. If he can descend into the abyss and then scale the other side, he can get a cab at Greenwich.

He lowers himself over the edge and plunges down a rocky slope. After he has gone a while he looks back. He can no longer see the station. Raising his eyes, as though contemplating the Tiepolo ceiling, he describes not whirling, atheosizing figures but a cloudless sky beaded with light. He continues down; on the next more level stretches the little evening primrose displays its pink blossoms. My life has been one long interruption, he muses, between what I intended to do and what I never got around to doing. While composing "Intimations of Wordsworth" was interrupted by the arrival of Mr. Olliff's load of dung, and went to work in the garden. But he finished it.

Slipping and sliding on the scree in suede loafers, Albert loses his footing and fetches up against a hoodoo. Brushing himself off, he discovers he is carrying something in his jacket pocket. What does he have in there? A pack of cigars? A bundle of love letters? A well-folded Speedo swimsuit? He fishes the object and unwraps it. For some unfathomable reason, a slice of bread.

DOLLAR DIPLOMACY

itions for foreign investors

by Matthew Stevenson

Except for speculative issues, notably China and some of the Islamic republics, securities on the world market are sharply off in brisk trading. Declines reflect continuing uncertainties over inflation, the cost of energy, and the future of the marketing agreements in the Middle East. The index should go lower before recovering in the early part of fiscal '81. Managers at USA, for

instance, decided to hedge their market position against a slide by selling short traditional allies, while at USSR directors voted to continue speculating in growth situations, primarily those in South Asia and Africa. In general, we favor at this time the stock of companies that are labor- rather than energy-intensive.

Matthew Stevenson is an assistant editor of Harper's.

Y

SAUDI ARABIA

Despite some diversification into petroleum and natural gas, its chief strength remains Islam, which showed record growth in 1979 and looks, in years ahead, to even bigger profits. Among the other distributors of oil, Pakistan showed the biggest gains. There, new leadership overcame the reluctance of old board members to leave office and pressed a vigorous sales campaign into the countryside.

Afghanistan is another firm in the business with a promising future, especially if dissident shareholders bring their suit against the acting chairman, who earlier in the year, without telling investors, merged with USSR. In the coming year, look for consolidation of gains made in Iraq and expansion of operations in Turkey and the Spanish Sahara.

MEXICO

Computerization, specialization, and a rising standard of living in North America have made Mexico the largest pool of cheap labor for USA, the most profitable account. Annoyed at the profits of Mexico, USA has tried repeatedly to end its monopoly on manpower. At one point USA quality control even planned to construct a huge fence along the Rio Grande to keep out Mexican surplus. But efforts at regulation have always failed.

Another bright spot for the company is its diversification. Fearing the day when the labor fields may run dry, it is beginning to expand into offshore oil and natural gas.

SOUTH AFRICA

Numerous meetings of the power commission have been held in the past two decades to decide whether this mineral-rich utility ought to become part of the continental grid. Given the energy requirements and peak power demands in the area, it seems likely that the utility will join one of the competing systems.

A proxy fight is the likely result. The United States is on record as advocating the integration of South Africa into the continental grid, but Britain, recently under new management, may try to bolster the independence of the utility in exchange for marketing privileges. Should that association fall through, the utility may decide to boost the price of its stock—to avoid takeover—by enlarging its operation to include a nuclear capacity.

VIETNAM

Ever since the American antitrust division acquiesced to Vietnam's development of an extensive interstate trail system, the company, formerly part of the French trading network, has flourished. Although profits last year along the Ho Chi Minh Trail were below the record years of the late 1960s, deregulation since 1975 allowed new paths to be cut westward into Cambodia and Laos. The firm's boat division also posted record gains, mostly on exports.

THE VATICAN

This may be the surprise of the 1980s. As it is labor-intensive, it can withstand, better than most, a reduction in energy supply.

The one question is the expansion of Islam. But top corporate officials are optimistic. They point to the growth of the company's pension. Its benefits and salvation plans are leaders in the industry. Islam, however competitive its pension offerings, is heavily dependent on profits from petroleum, which has an uncertain future.

USA

No longer trading at postwar highs, this company, which has shifted its emphasis from production to government services, appears ripe for takeover. Late last year, in an apparent scheme to lure offers, top corporate officials sold the dollar short and looked on as its value plummeted nearly 50 percent against other industrial currencies. Responding to tender offers from Germany and Japan, the stock has since recovered, but, in our estimation, remains undervalued.

Despite the decisions of early winter, 1979, to liquidate holdings in Taiwan and Iran, assets are strong. But questions have been raised about the quality of management. Since 1974 there have been two turnovers

in the corporate suite, and many analysts fear that board members devote too much time and energy consolidating their position within the firm. There is speculation several quarters that the sudden marketing offensive in Egypt-Israel is an effort to improve the balance sheet in time for the shareholders' meeting in November.

Should these international gambles fail, given the stiff regional competition in the Middle East, Libya and USSR, the stock will probably drop sharply. Thus, who want to maintain their current positions, so as to profit from expected takeover maneuvers, will do well to sell USA short, the sensible tactic in a falling market.

SELL

CHINA

This company, which trades in rice and alliances, remains the darling of Wall Street. In the great bull rally following the Carter fund's decision to sell Taiwan and buy China, the stock hit record highs. Even the messy proxy fight to regain control of its franchise in Cambodia did not dampen the enthusiasm for this, the hottest of the trading stocks. Nonetheless, its future may not be as bright as traders currently believe. Expansion into new territories will be difficult. Few nearby communities are interested in a Chinese subsidiary—witness the recent sales campaign in Vietnam. Nor is it thought that USSR will permit China unfettered growth without a stiff challenge. It is worth noting that in the past year USSR's holdings in Vietnam were up substantially.

EGYPT

A glamour stock despite crippling personnel and cash problems. As before, the chief remains its shrewd management, the threat of war. This year, promising not to go to war, Egypt will show returns of about 82 percent, most of which is profit. This compares with 1973, when, following another pledge to go to war against Israel, it accumulated almost \$2 billion in arms and munitions. USSR and local Arab investors bought houses. Despite reports circulating that Spain is trying to raise new capital in Washington by pledging not to wage war against Portugal, there is ample concern that this will not be a growth industry.

USSR

ended under the trade-
 "Russia," the company had its
 growth years under the name
 "Soviet Union," which is familiar
 most consumers. Recently, how-
 er, the board voted unanimously to
 only the corporate logo "USSR."
 is thought to be a public-
 relations move to bolster the image
 the firm as a dynamic, modern
 corporation. Whether it succeeds in
 practice as it has on paper remains
 to be seen, although with current
 market uncertainties, equity in USSR
 provides necessary portfolio balance.
 The first chairmen decided that
 the company's future was in the
 vigorous export of ideology, but
 current management is finding it

increasingly difficult to maintain the
 steady profits that were made over
 the years in divisions such as Eastern
 Europe.

USSR has yet to recover from the
 loss in the early Sixties of the
 Chinese subsidiary. Since then,
 campaigns have been undertaken
 to make up for this lost business, but
 with little success. In Africa, for
 instance, only the Cuban franchises
 in Angola and Ethiopia are showing
 adequate aggressiveness; the
 Romanian operation, within the
 coming year, may face management
 changes; and, except on spring days
 in Portugal and Italy, Western
 Europe has only a passing interest
 in the USSR product.



This dynamic corporation
 had another record year in 1978. In
 many ways, it remains the firm of the
 future and bears only a slight re-
 semblance to the small yet aggressive
 manufacturing outfit that was
 acquired and modernized by USA
 in the 1940s. What doubts there are
 about Japan concern its over-
 extended capital position. Even if
 the Securities and Exchange Com-
 mission were to allow a merger with
 USA, it is not known whether Japan
 has sufficient capital for such a joint
 venture, or whether a merger would
 strain its other financial commitments
 to the breaking point. Further, there
 are some analysts who argue that
 Japan should set its sights on a
 company other than USA, which
 may have already seen its best years.

IRAN

restors lost confidence in
 the stock—a favorite during the
 1970 years after the oil embargo—
 when USA decided to drop Iran as
 an American franchise in the
 Middle East. The decision to sell
 allowed the move by minority
 shareholders in Iran to oust the
 management consultants who, since
 1953, had been running the com-
 pany for the American conglomerate.
 For the rest of this year, traders
 are advised to follow the lead of
 the market and sell short equity in Iran.
 It would seem reckless to give up
 completely on the new corporate
 management. Despite flashy rhetoric at
 the shareholders' meetings, it has
 cooled down and seems earnest in
 trying on the efficient personnel
 policies that were the pride of the
 old administration.

ISRAEL

1979 has been a big year for
 this small trading company. The
 stock is at historic highs, making
 it a good time for profit-taking.

Privately owned since an antitrust
 suit against Great Britain established
 it as a separate entity, Israel decided
 in 1979 was the year to go public,
 and a controlling interest was
 quickly purchased by a group of
 investors in the United States
 Congress. The price paid for Israel
 is rumored to be in the \$3 billion
 range. It is not known whether the

sale includes territories in the West
 Bank and Gaza that Israel has
 managed since 1967.

In the past, Arab takeover fights
 have attempted to move in on
 Israel's lucrative real-estate monop-
 oly, but each time the board has
 resisted the takeover attempts. But
 the influx of petrodollars into the
 region may have driven the owners
 of Israel to go public and subse-
 quently sell to the Congress, which
 has always liked the company and
 uses it often in its public relations. □

BORDER CROSSINGS

At the frontiers of modern life

by Paul Fussell

A GREAT DEAL of modern intellectual energy has been expended on defining the idea of the modern. Everyone knows that the signs of modernism are complex and elusive, but anyone comparing the Western psyche of, say, 1830 with that of 1930 can't help noticing two large tendencies that mark—some would say stigmatize—the modern period. One is psychological, the other social and political. Psychologically, people we recognize as “modern” are gripped by a unique self-consciousness leading often to anxiety and, in its extreme forms, to self-contempt. And socially and politically, people we recognize as modern are constrained by a heightened bureaucratic control characterized by an increasing division and subdivision of political jurisdictions, where *political* embraces the notion of the institutional, and of course the corporate, as well as the state. An expression of both the psychological and political tendencies of modernism is the formerly unknown device of personnel coercion by citizen numbers: Social Security numbers, driver's-license numbers, license-plate numbers, telephone numbers, and in Europe, identity-card numbers.

Those who have labored to define the idea of the modern have been primarily literary, artistic, and cultural historians, and because they inhabit a world of books and abstract ideas, their search for the seeds and supports of modernism has led them naturally to intellectual history, to Kant and Hegel and Nietzsche and Freud and Heidegger and Wittgenstein. But then another and perhaps no less promising way of probing for the sources of the

modern sensibility, and that is to pay less attention to the presumed intellectual causes of unprecedented events than to the simple fact that they occur. (By unprecedented events I have in mind things like the sinking of the *Titanic*, the two world wars, the Holocaust, the Kennedy and King assassinations.) When “modern” events occur, people have to live with them, and living with them requires unique confrontations, rationalizations, and adjustments. To put it simply, the sum total of these confrontations and rationalizations and adjustments produces the modern sensibility. A glance at one dimension of real life in England and Europe sixty years ago will show what I'm getting at.

CONSIDER the sudden incursion of the passport into modern awareness. The passport was the novel instrument by which England restricted travel during the first world war and by which, like all other countries, it has interfered in it ever since. I say *novel* because before 1915 His Majesty's Government did not require a passport for departure, nor did any European state require one for admittance—except the two notoriously backward, neurotic venues of Russia and the Ottoman Empire. But after the Great War all Europe exhibited the state of mind Baedeker describes as characterizing prewar Russia: “If a passport is not in order, its unhappy owner has to recross the frontier, the train by which he came waiting for this purpose.”

When the illicit lovers D. H. Lawrence and Frieda Weekley fled England for Metz in 1912, they simply went, leaving from Charing Cross Station and crossing to Ostend and thence to Germany. No one asked to see any passports, and they carried none. When

in 1912 Gerald Brenan, propelled disdain for his terrible family, away from home, he crossed the Channel to France without any passport. He simply went, and disguised as a gaffer at that. He did carry a (false) birth certificate, but only to produce if required at the Austrian border with Italy. (At the moment Austria was nervous about spies.) So novel was the institution of the passport before the Great War that the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (1911) has never heard of it; by 1915 the *Britannica* is aware of it to the extent of 1,000 words.

Middle-aged British travelers of the Twenties and Thirties never tire of descanting on the prewar joys of traveling abroad, when, as C. E. Montague says, “Europe lay open to roamers’ feet... All frontiers were unlocked. You wandered freely about the Continent as if it were your own country. Plenty of us had pervaded... France, Italy, Switzerland and the Low Countries for twenty or thirty years without knowing what a passport looked like. Twenty years after the first world war Patrick Leigh-Fermor was hiking around in eastern Austria. “I was wandering across a field when a man in uniform began shouting from the dyke road overhead. Where the devil did I think I was going? It was the Austrian frontier post. ‘You were walking straight into Czechoslovakia!’ the official said reproachfully as he stamped my passport.”

What put a stop to passport wandering was Regulation 14c of the Defense of the Realm Act, passed by Parliament on November 30, 1915: “No person coming from or intending to proceed to any place out of the United Kingdom as a passenger shall not, without the special permission of a Secretary of State, land or embark at a port in the United Kingdom unless

Paul Fussell, author of *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford University Press), is writing a study of British travel and travel writing between the two world wars.

in his possession a valid passport." It was at first an emergency regulation, but like so many others—those concerning the closing hours of pubs, for example—it was not repealed after the war but simply left standing: it was convenient for the bureaucracy and one complained very much. During the war a few "war passports" were issued, especially for transatlantic travelers; these were one-way, with return tickets for the duration. Lawrence Sanders and his wife were in such bad odor that they were refused even these.

AS A FIXTURE of the general European scene since 1915, the passport now seems so natural that it's hard to imagine shock and scandal it once occasioned. The wit and traveler Robert Lynd is one who treated his passport with a due contempt. In the space "Any local peculiarities" he entered "Of melancholy appearance," and in the space reserved for a photograph of the traveler's wife he drew a ludicrous caricature, "resulting," Anthony Powell remembers, "in the document being withdrawn." In Byron and Christopher Isherwood's novel *Innocence and Design* (1955) Sir Christopher Bruce uses his passport, with its four blank visa pages, as a handy little notebook. The passport, as an institution was an occasion for laughter even through the late Thirties. In Evelyn Waugh's *Scoop* (1938) Liam Boot and his boss Mr. Salter, of the *Daily Beast*, forget all about the necessity of a passport for Boot's journalistic visit to Ishmaelia until, ready to board his plane, Boot's lack of a passport is belatedly discovered. He is only has to move all his traps back to London, including his collection of sticks, while Salter helps him acquire an emergency passport. "The Department will take your photograph and we have an Archdeacon in the Religious Department who will witness it." One of the warring Ishmaelian nations stamps its visa in Boot's passport, which, seen by officials at the consulate of the opposing faction, causes them to burn the little booklet. Lynd finally leaves England bearing two passports, both ridiculous. In an additional provision in Regulation 14c established for all time, as it is called, a further cause of comedy and embarrassment. "To every such pass-

port . . . there must be attached a photograph of the person to whom it relates." This was something unprecedented in history, the sort of thing intellectual historians are likely to miss when searching for the springs of modernism. So small a phenomenon as the passport picture, surfacing in 1915, has deeply affected the modern sensibility, assisting that anxious self-awareness, that secret but overriding self-contempt, which we recognize as attaching uniquely to the world of J. Alfred Prufrock, Kafka's Joseph K., and Beckett's Malone.

The subject of a passport picture knows in his heart of hearts the truth of Edward Weston's conclusion: "Only with effort can the camera be forced to lie: basically it is an honest medium." One truly "modern" question is: "Do I really look like that?" The question disturbs because, as Susan Sontag observes in *On Photography*, "All photographs are *memento mori*," testimonies of vulnerability:

Through photographs, we follow in the most intimate, troubling way the reality of how people age. To look at an old photograph of oneself . . . is to feel, first of all, how much younger I . . . was then. Photography is the inventory of mortality. A touch of the finger now suffices to invest a moment with posthumous irony.

And speaking of irony, we think of Prufrock. Eliot had written "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" by 1910 or 1911, but the poem was not published (in Harriet Monroe's *Poetry*) until 1915. Was it the new "passport atmosphere" that made it seem to Eliot's friend Ezra Pound especially worth sending to Monroe? Certainly a poem like "Prufrock" can be said to dramatize, among other things, the feeling attending awareness of one's own passport picture. A low-down version of "Prufrock" would be Laura Simmons's poem "Your Passport Picture":

*What though you hide it in your trunk—
Ere sailing hour has set?
Jammed down beneath your old blue serge?
Don't think you can forget!
The face within that passport book
Will rise to haunt you yet.*

The tradition of the passport picture as a demeaning, shame-making

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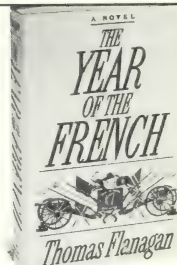
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corollary of modern life has been constant since 1915. In 1938 the editor of the *Daily Beast* summons Mr. Salter. A photograph of Boot is wanted:

"There must be a photograph of him somewhere in the world."

"They took one for his passport," said Mr. Salter, doubtfully, "but I remember thinking at the time it was an extremely poor likeness."

"I don't care if it looks like a baboon—"

"That's just how it does look."

But worse is to come. In Virginia Woolf's novel *Between the Acts* (1941) the final portion of Miss La Trobe's historical pageant concerns, as the program announces, "The Present Time. Ourselves." We know something absurd is going to happen, for "sounds of laughter came from the bushes." Without warning, out prances the entire cast, holding mirrors up to the audience, which thinks, "Ourselves? But that's cruel. To snap us as we are. . . . That's what's so distorting and upsetting and utterly unfair." The audience, "laughed at by looking-glasses," is as defenseless as the subject of a passport picture, who knows his intimate image is not merely on his passport but permanently on file somewhere, always available to be scrutinized and doubtless ridiculed by nameless but menacing civil servants. In Kingsley Amis's *I Like It Here* (1958) Garnet Bowen compares his passport picture of 1946 with his new one of 1956. Satiric analysis arrives finally at self-contempt:

The lad in the 1946 one had looked back at Bowen with petulant, head-on-one-side sensitivity. Wearing a nasty suit, he had seemed on the point of asking Bowen why he wasn't a pacifist or what he thought of Aaron's Rod. The 1956 Bowen was twice as wide and had something of the air of a television panelist. The question about Aaron's Rod would have concerned how much money whoever wrote it had made out of it. It was odd how the two of them could differ so much and yet both look exactly the kind of man he would most dislike to meet or be.

Twenty years later a cartoon in the *New York Times* depicts a man at the rail of a liner with a woman looking sick. He says, "Are you O.K., Sylvia? Suddenly you look like your passport photo."

IN ADDITION to the tormenting photograph, the 1915 form of the passport required the bearer to formulate and specify his "profession." This open invitation to self-casting and social promotion; not to mention fraud, led of course to its own kinds of irrelevant or falsifying pseudo-precision. There were comic possibilities of error, too, like those noticed by Arthur Marshall. In applying for his passport he gave his profession as WRITER, but wrote the R carelessly. When his passport was issued, it designated him a WAITER—a profession, he had occasion to discover, "which apparently is not very highly regarded at frontiers." The 1915 form of the British passport also devoted one page to "Description of Bearer." Here were entered not just such particulars as age, profession, and date and place of birth, but such physical data as height (but not, interestingly, weight) and color of hair and eyes. "Forehead" had to be described ("medium" was a favorite), as did nose ("straight," "normal," "hooked," et cetera), mouth ("medium," "normal"—did anyone ever write "whimsical" or "attractive"?), chin ("small"), complexion ("fresh," "ruddy"), and face ("oval," "round," "square"). Largely because of these pathetically useless gestures at accurate description, it became a convention in the Twenties and Thirties that in addition to generating anxious self-consciousness, the passport falsifies as well, not least by remaining static while the person alters. As early as 1922 Lawrence conceives of the passport as a handy metaphor of misrepresentation when in *Aaron's Rod* he sets Aaron Sisson musing in northern Italy about which is the authentic Aaron, the former married one or the current single one wandering abroad. "When I am formulated, sprawling on a pin," says Prufrock; "When I am pinned and wriggling on the wall." In Aaron's mind

was pinned up a nice description of himself, and a description of [his former wife] Lottie, sort of authentic passports to be used in the conscious world. These authentic passports, self-describing: nose short, mouth normal, etc.; he had insisted that they should do all the duty of the man himself. This ready-made and very banal idea of himself as a really quite nice individual: eyes blue, nose short,

mouth normal, chin normal. . . . he had insisted was really himself. It was his conscious mask.

But Aaron's flight abroad, ironical the action that has made his passport and its details so familiar to him, has changed that:

Now at last, after years of struggle, he seemed suddenly to have dropped his mask on the floor, and broken it. His authentic self, scribbling passport, his complete and satisfactory idea of himself suddenly became a rag of paper, ridiculous.

Aaron's self-consciousness, his concern with "authenticity," we recognize as distinctively modern, and it is the passport that propels him on his personal journeying and exploration of self. Distinctively modern too is a ritual occasion for anxiety, the poignant moment one presents the passport at a frontier. In 1920 Lawrence serves with fascination the anxiety of the half-gentleman and debtor Magnus as he "passes" the "examination" of passports upon arriving in Malta. "Yes, he passed all right. . . . more he was free." Having passed Maurice's anxieties are temporarily stilled, and he becomes again "superb and brisk." In the modern travel experience, it is the moment presenting one's passport to cross from one state to another that is the de facto equivalent of the moment in myth or romance literature when the traveler setting out, defeats or conciliates the guardian. In Joseph Campbell's terms, the "shadow presence" that guards the hero's passage out of his own country allows him through the gate onto his adventures. For the traditional hero, it is a moment of triumph; for the modern traveler, it is a moment of humiliation, a reminder that he is merely the state's creature, one of the country's replaceable parts. And the experience is worse. It would be degrading to dwell on the amount of universal modern anxiety experienced by the traveler returning to his own country when the passport officer slowly turns through his book of pariahs searching for the name of the traveler there. The British wartime atmosphere that created the passport as an institutionalized and metamorphosed human creature into personnel units is unwittingly evoked by the language of Lord Dunsany, who noticed in 1915 the

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apparently healthy young men around London. Wondering whether it wasn't time for conscription to be applied, he spoke of them as "very good male material." Here as elsewhere, real life goes well beyond the nightmares of Huxley's *Brave New World* or Orwell's *1984*, not to mention Heller's *Catch-22* and Pynchon's *Gravity's Rainbow*.

Here is a poem by Basil Bunting, written in the early Thirties:

*This impartial dog's nose
scrutinizes the lamppost. All in
good order.
He sets his seal on it and
moves on to the next.*

*(The drippings of his forerunners
convey no information,
barely a precedent.
His actions are reflex.)*

Is this about a dog peeing on a lamppost? No, it's titled *The Passport Officer*, and nicely registers the post-World War I sense of the reduction and dehumanization of everyone, officials included, touched by what Norman Douglas called "the passport nuisance." Hitler's father was a frontier official, a customs inspector. For Rebecca West, Hitler as a phenomenon becomes more or less understandable when we remember that he was literally "the child of one of those parasites on our social system, a douanier."

IN 1930 two strangers meet by chance in a compartment of a train crossing the Dutch-German border. One is young William Bradshaw, like Christopher Isherwood fleeing England for the broader erotic opportunities of Berlin. The other is Mr. Arthur Norris, clad in a suit that looks costly and equipped with a gold cigarette lighter and a wig. If Maurice Magnus suffers passport anxiety, it is nothing to the fit of nerves that seizes Mr. Norris as the train approaches the frontier. The first sign of fear Bradshaw notices is his "nervous recoil" when asked for a light.

*His fingers, nervously active,
sketched a number of flurried ges-
tures round his waistcoat.*

*"Do you know what time we ar-
rive at the frontier?" [Bradshaw
asks Norris.]*

*"I'm afraid I couldn't tell you
exactly. In about an hour's time, I
believe."*

An unpleasant thought seemed

*to tease him like a wasp [Isher-
wood writes]. He moved his head
slightly to avoid it. Then he added,
with surprising petulance:*

*"All these frontiers...such a
horrible nuisance." [Norris sym-
pathizes:] "They ought to be done
away with."*

*"I quite agree with you. They
ought indeed."*

By the time the train crosses the frontier and slows down at Bentheim, where passports will be examined, Mr. Norris has revealed that he is an extraordinarily experienced traveler; indeed, he has "delivered a lecture on the disadvantages of most of the chief European cities." Bradshaw reports:

*He had suffered from rheumatics
in Stockholm and draughts in Kaus-
nas; in Riga he had been bored,
in Warsaw treated with extreme
discourtesy, in Belgrade he had
been unable to obtain his favorite
brand of tooth-paste. In Rome he
had been annoyed by insects, in
Madrid by beggars, in Marseilles
by taxi-horns.*

But now the train has stopped, and in the corridor a dread voice is heard: "*Deutsche Pass-Kontrolle*. All passports please." Mr. Norris is now almost sick with anxiety, which he covers by prattling in an unnatural voice about the topography of Athens. When the frontier guard takes Mr. Norris's passport out into the corridor and after scrutinizing it holds a page against the light, "I was amazed," says Bradshaw, "to see what a state he was in: his fingers twitched and his voice was scarcely under control." But Norris somehow survives the test, and as his passport is returned he sinks back and calls for fresh air. "All this traveling...very bad for me." As Isherwood's *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* (1935) goes on to reveal, the "charming" Mr. Norris, nominally in the import-export business, has cause to be nervous at frontiers. He is a con man and swindler, a pornographer and whip-collector, a pimp and frequent bankrupt, and known to the police of many countries as a grossly mercenary spy and go-between. His consciousness of frontiers and the threat they pose is necessarily extreme. But even if exaggerated it suggests the general sense of frontiers as menacing that forms so large a part of the imagination between the two world wars. The way to imitate an early Auden poem is to get as many

frontiers into it as possible. P. Stansky and William Abrahams's for their book about Julian Bell John Cornford, *Journey to the Frontier* (1966), perfectly catches the tone, fusing as it does the title of Auden Isherwood's play *On the Frontier* (1938) with that of their friend ward Upward's novel *Journey to the Border* (1938).

The anomalous "front" of the World War, that appalling line of wretchedly demarcating the border between Allies and Central Powers, helps establish for the succeeding two decades the idea that a frontier is not just absurd but sinister. Indeed the historian of the modern imagination could trace almost a direct conceptual tradition from the idea of trenches to that of the Maginot Line, the division of Korea at the Thirtieth Parallel to the Berlin Wall, "iron curtains" marking strict geographical zones of malign, usually vital, import. It is in the tradition of 1938 Hitler's demands of Czechoslovakia took the form of talk about "the revision of frontiers," and that second world war effectively began with Hitler's crossing the Polish frontier, a line originally devised by remote, scholarly geographers of the Congress of Paris in 1919. Here the experts of the various foreign offices as A. J. P. Taylor calls them, reward the European frontiers to reward victors and humiliate losers, and for the next twenty years Europe became frontier-obsessed and, like Auden, riddled with mad.

AS A RESULT OF the treaties just of Versailles but Neuilly, St.-Germain, Trianon and Sévres, dramatic alterations were worked on the borders of Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Austria, Denmark, Greece, and the former Ottoman Empire. The frontiers of Romania, Poland, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia were defined or redefined. "Fiume" "Danzig" were equipped with their own small frontiers in their new capacity as free cities or states. This multiplication and alteration of frontiers served to advertise the irrational nationalism that constituted so large a part of the European tone between the wars, a nationalism borrowing v

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from the bullying vainglory of the Allied victors hot for reparations and from the self-pitying whine of the German underdog. At the end of his adventures Mr. Norris has had enough of Europe—he is about to be arrested again—and determines on flight to the New World. "I feel I need a complete change of scene," he tells William Bradshaw. "One's so confined here, so restricted. As you get older, William, you'll feel that the world gets smaller. The frontiers seem to close in, until there's scarcely room to breathe." But the New World had its nasty frontiers, too, as Graham Greene discovered in Mexico in 1938. Entering the Mexican state of Tabasco by boat at Frontera, he feels of course something of Mr. Norris's anxiety and observes, "It is before you cross a frontier that you experience fear." Try to imagine Wordsworth saying that, or even the proto-modern Matthew Arnold, and you have an idea of the uniqueness of "the modern," whatever exactly it is.

The British are singularly sensitive to land frontiers because (with the exception of the one embarrassing line separating Ulster from Ireland) they have none. This fact alone makes them special among Europeans. For the British, national boundaries that are not a matter of immemorial sea and shore but drawn by the hand of man are at best ridiculous and at worst monstrous. As the British journalist Hector Bolitho says, "It is not easy for us to comprehend the warping influence of ever-changing frontiers upon European people. . . . Our frontiers are defined by nature and have not been subject to the caprice of any congress." It is not an Alsatian or an Austrian but the quintessential Englishman Robert Byron, widely traveled between the wars, who asserts: "There is something absurd about a land frontier." Ironical, then, that it was the British themselves, saddled with the Balfour Declaration, who for two generations had to draw and police impossible land frontiers in Palestine.

The British conviction of the absurdity of the thing is what leads to the satiric high jinks practiced by so many British travelers of the Twenties and Thirties as they encounter land frontiers or experience the ludicrous parochialism these frontiers betoken and encourage. In the autumn of 1938,

at Tabriz, Persia, Byron and his friend Christopher Sykes can't resist returning the frontier *fiche* filled out this way:

AVIS	
<i>Je soussigné</i>	{ Robert Byron Christopher Sykes
<i>Sujet</i>	{ anglais anglais
<i>et exerçant la profession de</i>	{ peintre philosophe
<i>déclare être arrivé en date du</i>	{ 13me octobre 13me octobre
<i>accompagné de</i>	{ un djinn un livre par Henry James

For the British especially the idea of a frontier town is synonymous with fraud, greed, stupidity, and sadism. Thus Peter Fleming as he crosses from China into India finds that "Tashkurgan was a frontier town if ever there was one. It had . . . the air of living on passers-by," and was therefore a great place for "trumped-up passport regulations, inspired by aimless malice."

One would not have to be British, or even notably sensible, to perceive that the frontiers attending the whole concept of "Fiume" constitute a scandal. In 1925 Osbert Sitwell sets a little passport farce on the border between Fiume and Italy. Among the hazards is the special stupidity of the frontier guards. One of them, frowning over the first page of the absurd little booklet proffered by Sitwell, firmly mistakes the official granter of the passport, Lord Curzon, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, for "bearer," and in a fury of political self-righteousness asserts that Lord Curzon, notorious as an "enemy" of Fiume, is on no account allowed to enter. Sitwell's comic contempt for the guard seems somehow British, and so does the empiricism and moral outrage of Rebecca West's account of the miseries in 1937 of Fiume. a town

that has the quality of a dream, a bad headachy dream. Its original character is rotund and sunburnt and solid, like any pompous southern port, but it has been hacked by treaties into a surrealist form. On a ground plan laid out plainly by sensible architects for sensible people, there is imposed another, quite imbecile, which drives high

walls across streets and thereb sets contiguous houses half an hour apart by detour and formality. And at places where no frontiers could possibly be, in the middle of a square, or on a bridge linking the parts of a quay, men in uniform step forward and demand passports, minatory as figures projected into sleep by an uneasy conscience.
"This has meant," said my husband as we wandered through the impeded city, "infinite suffering to a lot of people," and it is true. Because of it many old men have said to their sons, "We are ruined, many lawyers have said to widows, "I am afraid there will be nothing, nothing at all."

That's an impressive passage, brilliantly conceived and brilliantly written. And it is acute in perceiving two "modern" facts at once: the inevitable association between passports and anxiety and the correlation between the idea of frontiers and the idea of ruin. West's passage has further implications for an inquirer into this subject. The image of Fiume as "hacked by treaties into a surrealist form" suggests a relation between the literal frontier situation between the wars and the method of the art and writing of those years, ending at a critical, and even satirical, refraction of modern actuality.

Fragmenting and dividing anew, parceling out and shifting around, repositioning—these are the actualities implicit in the redrafting of frontiers. All these actions betray a concern with current space instead of time or tradition. All imply an awareness of reality as disjoined, dissociated, fractured. These actions of dividing anew, shifting around provide the method of collage in painting, and in writing provide the method we recognize conspicuously "modern," the method of anomalous juxtaposition. Think of *The Wasteland* and the *Cantos* of *Ulysses* and their reliance on disjointed "quotations" from others or from one's self. In modern writing the quotations attaching to the old, readily understandable order of reasonable narrative sequence (cf. "modern European history") are defeated, and we are left with "spatial form," as Joseph Frank calls it, rather than traditional temporal form, governing the literature eloquent of the anxious, troubled relation between the wars.

IN OUR TIME

by Tom Wolfe

World-weary



"I got this supervisor where I work—these middle-age people, man, they're like children. All they think about is sex and dope. He's always coming around with this little grin on his face, talking about amyl nitrite and PBD. I mean, poppers and all that stuff—that's what you do in the ninth or tenth grade, man."

COLLECTIVE DREAD

The literature of doom

by Paul Zwarg

THERE IS A SPIRIT abroad in the land, a feeling that history has been drawn out to its thin brittle end and will soon snap. Not long ago a group of scientists known as the Club of Rome informed us that we had maybe thirty years before civilization collapsed under the pressures of expanding population and contracting food supplies. There was hardly time to absorb this gloomy news when energy experts predicted a crisis by the mid-1980s that would drive the world into a definitive economic decline, with large-scale energy wars, the return of the sailboat, the windmill, the bicycle, and walking—lots of walking. Meanwhile ecologists warned that a “greenhouse effect” was going to melt the polar ice caps, drowning the world’s coastal cities under several hundred feet of water; that every squeeze of a spray can depleted the ozone layer of the upper atmosphere and let through increasing doses of solar radiation, causing cancer, genetic mutations, and God knows

what else. Not only do we feel fragile as individuals these days, we feel fragile as a species, as in a psychotic’s end-of-the-world fantasy. Not that there isn’t plenty to worry about, between inflation, international terrorism, and the bomb.

After all, *Candide* didn’t exactly live in happy times either, nor did the ancient Greeks, whose acrid wisdom Nietzsche quotes in *The Birth of Tragedy*: “Best is not to have been born at all; the next best is to die as quickly as possible.” Apparently men have often experienced civilized life as a borderline condition, in the process of getting worse, and history is, ultimately, the story of bad times. Yet during this curiously quiescent decade of the “Seventies,” so filled with eddies of conflicting worry that one has yet to find a name for it, we seem to be possessed by a dream of grandiose catastrophe that is so oddly satisfying that we offer it as a “solution” to every sufficiently anxious preoccupation.

It seems that we have lost patience

with merely private suffering. A month ago, critic Anatole Broya wrote nostalgically in the *New York Times* about the old-fashioned “roses” that gave people a feeling of twisted dignity, a sort of secular sainthood, available to sufferers who knew how to live in their minds. Today, apparently, pain requires a larger stake than only all of history will do. And so the myths sprout, as we replace private anxiety, the fear of failure and death with the shipwreck of the race.

From this point of view, the fantasy of Armageddon is a dark inversion of the social imperative: when the prospect of living together seems traumatically threatened, man, social to last, turns to the fantasy of dying together. Maybe that is why the mass suicide at Jonestown has become such an ugly image for our times. The release from private pain that our f

Paul Zweig’s most recent book is *Three Fables: An Automythology* (Basic Books). He teaches comparative literature at Queens College, City University of New York.



of Armageddon offers us as a kind of collective wish-fulfillment, James sought in the living flesh. Like the devilish Don Quixote, he picked up the text from the air of the times and added on it, and 900 people, who were by a little more helpless in their lives than most of us feel, followed willingly. Styles of thought, like styles of dress, circulate in the body politic by an effect of "contagion," and the distance is not as great as we like to think between popular fantasy and the aloof intentions of the philosophers and the poets. From the current crop of disaster movies, for example, to Jim Houghan's notion of "technology" as a creeping, voracious blob, a sort of science-fiction monster that he calls a "chreod," is not very far.*

THE QUINTESSENTIAL doomsday book—one hopes its very Germanic thoroughness will explode the genre—is Christopher Lasch's *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations*.** Lasch—the one who becomes Dickensian in the conclusion—is Biblical and relentless, a Jeremiah without the horizon line of despair and hope. We live in a "dying

Decadence: Radical Nostalgia, Narcissism, and Decline in the Seventies, by William Houghan (William Morrow, 1975). Social philosophers who would not be found in the same room with Houghan, or share each other for that matter, share fundamental, yet oddly exhilarating, commonalities, and the list of dark prophets is long: Philip Rieff, Robert L. Heilbroner, Richard Sennett, Barry Commoner, William Irwin Thompson, to name only a few who see the End of Days written as secret signature in every major problem of the late century.

* Published by W.W. Norton in January (268 pages; \$11.95). Lasch's book had quite an impact. At least partly through his effort, "narcissism" bids fair to replace "alienation" as the cant word of our decade, although, as with "alienation," no one seems quite sure he knows what the word means—supposing, as the psychoanalyst Leslie Farber wondered recently, that it means anything at all. This doesn't prevent Lasch's book from being serialized in newspapers, universities from setting up seminars "narcissism" as they did only a few years ago on "alienation." Indeed, "narcissism" may simply be "alienation" reworded, i.e., the latest slogan for designating what in theological times used to be called original sin, meaning all the ways in which human beings dependably

wrong," he writes: all around us, bureaucracy, mechanization, the destructive fantasia of the media, a Hobbesian war of all against all; within us, the corroding structures of personality, isolating the individual ever more desperately from others, and from himself.

Chapter by chapter, Lasch zeroes in on every widely acknowledged source of pain and failure in contemporary society. Indeed, the materials for Lasch's analysis are, largely, derivative. Any reader of Philip Rieff on the dangers of the "therapeutic," or of Richard Sennett on the psychological consequences of corporate behavior, or of Ivan Illich on the failure of the schools, or indeed of the morning newspaper on everything from ecological ruin to the problems of the welfare system, will recognize the source of Lasch's indictments. Lasch's contribution has been to package them into a single relentless narrative, focusing on the central issue raised in his title. The world may end with a bang, he intones, but it is more likely to end with a whimper, as the moral life of the polity becomes increasingly polluted by the relentless unhappiness of ever larger numbers of people. This collective unhappiness—according to Lasch, it is the last thing we still share—has in fact already reached the breaking point, because contemporary society, in all its aspects, has forced the personality of individuals into a single doomed mold captured by the clinical term *narcissism*.

In this "declining" period of "late capitalism," Lasch argues, the bonds of mutuality and feeling, the very tissue of society, are failing. In the family, at work, in public affairs, the individual engages increasingly in a war of envy and self-display, giving rise to "a lawless . . . society, in which the normal conditions of everyday life come to resemble those formerly confined to the underworld." The battle-shocked victims of this all-out war limp in droves to psychiatrists, who find them ill in new and ominous ways. Instead of the by-now-familiar neuroses, which Lasch seems to accept as forms of normal misery, doctors discover a pervasive discomfort with life, on the "borderline" between health and illness, or else a compulsive egotism, an inability to

relate to others, which the new theorists of the psyche classify as a "narcissistic personality disorder."

What is fascinating about Lasch's argument is the combination of his daunting expertise in the social and psychological sciences with the folkloric gloom of Armageddon—a combination, by the way, that virtually characterizes the contemporary literature of doom: it speaks the language of science while reciting the perennial narrative of the Apocalypse. Lasch, in any case, leans heavily upon the religious power of scientific language. He represents a new kind of positivist, devoted not to light and hope but to hopelessness and the abyss. And like the happy positivists of a century ago, he misreads the actual complexity of human events.

It seems not to occur to Lasch that the problems he catalogues encyclopedically might affect people in a diversity of ways: that they might affect different classes of people differently, that contemporary life might be more full of surprises—and, who knows, of new beginnings, albeit many of them painful—than he is willing to tolerate. In this he is a bit like a novelist who is so possessed by an idea that he forgets to include in his tale the concealments and surprises of actual experience. Lasch's description of contemporary society as an "underworld" owes more to nightmare than to history, which, had Lasch been interested, might have informed him about the appalling level of violence in American public life during the last century, or about the decimation of whole classes of society in eighteenth-century England by alcoholism: awful facts of life, yes, but not signs of "decadence" or moral collapse.

This lack of historical imagination appears most damagingly in Lasch's treatment of "narcissism" as the characteristic human failure of our time. The Freudian concept of "narcissism" has always been notoriously hard to pin down, and the recent works on the subject by Otto Kernberg* and Heinz Kohut,** on whom Lasch's analysis

* *Borderline Conditions and Pathological Narcissism* (Jason Aronson, 1975).

** *The Analysis of the Self: A Systematic Approach to the Psychoanalytic Treatment of Narcissistic Personality Disorders* (International Universities Press, 1971).

depends heavily, have not made it much easier. Lasch seems to enjoy Kohut's bulky scientific jargon as Lasch dishes out mechanistic descriptions of the psyche bulging with "cathexes" and "introjects," "aggressive drives in the id, unmixed with libido," and so forth. All of this distills finally into Lasch's portrait of the unfortunate hero of our times—"facile at managing the impressions he gives to others, ravenous for admiration but contemptuous of those he manipulates into providing it; unappeasably hungry for emotional experiences with which to fill an inner void; terrified of aging and death." In a crumbling society, Lasch asserts, the individual psyche, too, must crumble, and Narcissus is the worm in the fruit of declining capitalism.

There are so many things wrong with this argument one hardly knows where to begin. How does Lasch, or anyone else for that matter, know that the incidence of "narcissism" has drastically increased in recent decades? The branch of psychoanalysis that has tried to give some sort of diagnostic precision to the term is fairly new, and has become popular among therapists, as new specialties often do. Can we not surmise that Lasch's epidemic of "narcissism" results, at least in part, from the new diagnostic point of view, and that the terminology creates the illness? It seems likely, too, that human beings have always picked their way along some "borderline" or other, and have, therefore, always provided evidence to whoever wanted it that the psyche is a house of eggshells. Did not idyllic old America produce Poe and Melville, with their "sick" visions, as well as Whitman and Emerson, with their "healthy" ones?

As for Lasch's particular diagnosis of "narcissism," it belongs to a tradition far older than the present "decadent" period of "late capitalism." This is Engels writing about London in the 1870s:

The more that Londoners are packed into a tiny space, the more repulsive and disgraceful becomes the brutal indifference with which they ignore their neighbors and selfishly concentrate upon their private affairs. We know well enough that this isolation of the individual—this narrow-minded egotism—is

everywhere the fundamental principle of modern society.

And lest we think the critic's worried eye has detected a problem particular to the largest city of an industrial nation, here is Tocqueville, in a famous passage written forty years earlier about predominantly rural America:

Among democratic peoples, new families are always rising out of obscurity, others are always falling back, and those that remain are changing; time's pattern is broken at every moment, and the remains of past generations are obliterated. . . . Thus not only does democracy make each man forget his ancestors, it hides his descendants from him, and divides him from his contemporaries; it continually turns him back into himself, and threatens, at last, to enclose him entirely in the solitude of his own heart.

Egotism, self-love, the failure of community: these represent long-standing indictments by a tradition of social criticism, deriving probably from Rousseau and governed by the nostalgic dream of the happy community. This legendary happy community is the "golden age" of our social mythology, located by different critics in the primitive tribe or the feudal village or the pre-urban world of Renaissance England, or the intelligent society of Enlightenment Paris or the simple, unkinky life of the 1930s or the 1950s—but always in some past time when people were supposed to be happier and more generous, less preoccupied with self than they are now. Lasch has updated the terminology and radicalized the worry, but his indictment is finally an old, even a stale one.

This brings me to another point. Lasch's book, like so much of the recent invective against "narcissism" (I'm thinking of Sennett's *The Fall of Public Man*, and of Peter Marin's articles here in *Harper's*), is curiously high-strung and defensive about the social capabilities of man, quick to deplore as "decadent" and "sick" the dimensions of personality that do not willingly turn toward others. This widely held point of view amounts to what I would call a tyranny of the social, a sort of anti-individualism, which fails to recognize the sinuous conflict between the individual and

society that has been the signature of Western cultural history.

Imagine a psychiatric Jeremiah Lasch parachuted into the late twentieth century. I wonder how he would diagnose the extravagant open scene in Rousseau's *Confessions*, where Rousseau, his book in his hand, stands on the platform of the Last Judgment, inviting the human race to go around and hear the story of his supposedly "innocent" life. Could there be more "narcissistic" inversion of the Biblical scenario of judgment?

Crossing the English Channel, he hears Lasch inveighing gloomily against the gigantic, unhappy struggle with self, which characterized seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England, among Protestants who were fanatically "cissistic" in their devotion to the inner workings of their minds and the stingy, methodical increasing of their private wealth. Now, I am going to believe that Puritan England was a very unhappy place, perhaps unhappier than our own. Yet the visions of that grim, turbulent time give rise to one of the wealthiest, most complex societies ever known. Narcissus, in Puritan England, was the fifth horseman of the Apocalypse, but one of the tutelary gods of history, and he still is, I suspect, for all the moralizing of the social philosophers.

In this longer perspective, Narcissus is seen to be not so much a worm in the fruit as a perpetual advocate against the longing for community, an arch-heretic whose refusal to fit represents that aspect of human personality which resists the social and has, presumably, always resisted.

Lasch does, here and there, grudgingly that even the most extravagant self-regard can sometimes be a "healthy" component of personality and cultural struggle, but he seems not to know what to do with the tinctures that threaten the bleakness of his argument. He nods with pathological approval at Whitman and Emerson, for example, without naming clear why, genius aside, they resent "better" symptoms for the future than, say, Norman Mailer or other self-regarding writers of our own day. Freud and practicing psychoanalysts like Kohut are aware of how close in character traits and manner the pathological "narcissism" can be to a variety of productive

alities who are also, undoubtedly, narcissistic," also struggling with an- and self-distrust, but who fuse the ggle into a personal signature that somehow bridges the gap between themselves and what they love. To sus- a feeling for such differences would have forced Lasch to wield his philosophical hammer more delicately.

THERE IS A SENSE in which Lasch's diagnosis of the ills of contemporary society represents an essential misreading of Freud, to whom we owe the concept of "narcissism." Freud stirred the hostility of his contemporaries asserting that sanity and mental illness had more in common than anyone had ever thought, and that much of what we value in ourselves springs from mental configurations that closely resemble various forms of pathology. Freud was not simply saying that we are all sick; he was saying also that the sick are more like us than we think. Lasch has taken Freud's perception of the pathos of illness and truth and stood it on its head: he is not the essential humanness of mental pathology, but an invasive illness blighting the normal pursuits of man. Freud raised "illness," Lasch lowers "health."

In this, Lasch expresses the apocalyptic pessimism of the Seventies. For the time being, these days, under the shadow of a number: 2,000, the end of the second millennium, which will be upon us in twenty-one years. As the century fades, we seem to have become attuned to waning in everything: the waning world power of our country; the waning energy supplies; waning moral firmness and sociability. I think it is Marx who wrote that when history repeats itself, the second time it is farce. During the fading years of the nineteenth century, Europeans turned to their cultural obsession with "decadence" and moral collapse at the "end of century," *fin de siècle*. We seem to be replaying a media-magnified farce of the *fin de siècle*: a sort of end-of-century blues that has caused us to lose interest in the tensions and contradictions—the essential unrepeatability—of history in favor of a quick but wide-screen legend of precarious decline and final ending. □

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THE MISCHIEF OF FICTION

A search for meaning

by Jeffrey Burke

Wild Oats, by Jacob Epstein. 267 pages. Little Brown, \$9.95.

Only Children, by Alison Lurie. 257 pages. Random House, \$9.95.

Jake's Thing, by Kingsley Amis. 276 pages. Viking, \$9.95.

The Pardoner's Tale, by John Wain. 314 pages. Viking, \$10.95.

The Living End, by Stanley Elkin. 143 pages. E. P. Dutton, \$7.95.

Only connect. —E.M. Forster

ONCE KNEW a wise professor of English literature who made it clear to each new class that despite the popularity of open-ended discussion, he felt students learned more by being taught. He favored his lectures over what he called their "exotic speculation," believing that in 1971 the literary value of *Hudibras* was not immediately apparent to a roomful of nineteen-year-olds. His final examination consisted of fifty objective questions, which tended to weed out the exotic speculators. They flourished elsewhere, nurtured by a quantitative approach to education. An English major's training features the reading-for-reconnaissance list—know your enemy "from Beowulf to Virginia Woolf"—as well as the obstacle course of critical theories, or what doctoral dissertations want to be when they grow up. Add a handbook of literary terms, the relevant *Oxford Companions*, and a furrowed brow, and the student sits ready to do battle with the final exam's typical essay question: "Compare and contrast *Robinson Crusoe*, *Middlemarch*, *Great Expectations*, and *Finnegans Wake* (Ten minutes)."

Three such questions in each of four different finals for perhaps six semesters produces in the febrile undergraduate mind the analytical bent expressed by that far-reaching school of criticism

known as the poetics of possibility. For those few English B.A.'s who do not go straight to law school (where interpretation operates from a slightly less-imaginative base) the affliction is inescapable. Despite the wise professor and the years spent in reality since English-majordom, even the most rational reviewer eventually tries again to spin grand webs of significance from the sweetness and light of a few innocent novels. I will be quizzing you at the end, so read carefully.

JACOB EPSTEIN completed *Wild Oats*, his first novel, before graduating from Yale last year, so it is likely that he majored in English or in its reality coefficient, creative writing, but less likely that he ever resembled his novel's hero. Billy Williams (or Billy Billies—call him Everyboy) is a sensitive, reasonably intelligent English major struggling through his first semester at a small New England college. He faces a legion of the standard problems—sex, alcohol, homework—that seem overwhelming at his age but are only a small part of his rite of passage to an adulthood whose representatives in Billy's life all fall short of satisfactory. To this familiar theme Epstein adds little, though his imagination and sense of humor and of structure rate more than a patronizing nod to his "potential" as a novelist. Where he errs is on the side of realism. Billy is so true a type of American eighteen-year-old that his status in literary history requires some new classification, such as sub-anti-hero, and a recasting of Oscar Wilde's ironic axiom: "Life enervates art." Keep in mind that Billy's nemesis, English professor Russo, is sleeping with Jeffrey Burke writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Frances Taliaferro.

Billy's classmate and lost lust, Zanzibar.

Where in Alison Lurie's *Only Children* are the children? Of the two married couples—each with a daughter one with a son—and their hostess a Fourth of July weekend in 1935, the son, fourteen-year-old Leonard Zimmern, does not act childishly, is ineluctably in-between. The nonadults play games, act spoiled, when frightened, pout when injured, tease, whine, and toy with Lurie treats them with more sympathy than scorn, however, mindful that to alter all—to modify the title—they are also only human. The two young girls reveal the title's understatement. They express the poetry of a child's imagination, the extremes of sensitivity to emotion, whether playing, quarreling or being alone with the interior monologue of impressions that Lurie beautifully conveys. From their observations of adulthood and from the behavioral counterpoint of the two age groups Lurie creates a satire that is as effective as, yet milder than, that of *War Between the Tates*, her previous novel. In that book, set in the Sixties, Leonard Zimmern is an English professor at a New England college, Lurie in real life.

Meanwhile, in merrie olde England Kingsley Amis casts a cold eye on cock-and-bull show-and-tell of moose sex therapy. In *Jake's Thing* a nineteen-year-old Oxford don named Richardson, told that there is no physical cause for his libidinal failures, subjects himself to a persistently fish shrink, a machine attached nowhere wise for arcane nocturnal calibrations, a similar contraption set up in an attended operating theater, and a rat/Sade variety of group therapy.

se are just the high (or low) its on Jake's tour; numerous side—his wife's smug encouragement, oring feminists at Oxford—add his growing skepticism and disgust. is a bitter Jim Dixon (the hero of s's first novel, *Lucky Jim*) grown less tolerant of, and too old to faces at, fools. For all the truth his contemporary Satyricon, and all the pleasure of Amis's wit, Jake res too easily at misogyny as the al solution to his problem. Amis's e is, in the end, as excessive as s's reaction, and it makes Jake—Lemuel Gulliver finally taking his s at the stable—no less a deserving m than any of the intended tar- Although it is Jake's closest friend Oxford who is the English profes- Amis himself is an Honorary Fel- of that university.

esides reminding the reading pub- that there once existed a genius ed Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Par- r's Tale* proves that such genius s updating. In alternating chap- John Wain tells the story of a lled-aged man moving from a bro- marriage to an apparently ideal r, and of a middle-aged novelist that story while he mourns a rted lover and finds himself drawn sexual adventure with the young hter of a dying woman who has d him to share her last months. capsule in danger of capsizing.) fellow's newfound love repre- a kind of salvation, and both go it greedily. The dying woman harbored years of hatred for the and who left her early in their iage, and she demands that the list write her story in surrogate age. All three characters are con- orary exemplars of the moral in acer's "Pardoner's Tale": *Radix rum est cupiditas*, "The root of all is greed"—or "desire." *Cupiditas* mean either, a pointed ambiguity, each of Wain's three principal acters perverts emotion into ap- e. The glint of hope with which novel ends hardly balances Wain's my theme. On the other hand, the s's complexity and insight go far aking up for that half of the book hich the prose style is that of a lar novelist. Wain lives in Oxford has held the position of Professor oetry at the university.

HOWEVER MUCH these four novels appear to have little in common (subtle hints were provided along the way), it is possible to arrive at a final interpretation in keeping with the poetics of possibility. Given that a random sample of recent fiction consists of: English majors writing about English majors, English professors writing about English professors, English professors sleeping with English majors, English professors from one novel growing down to become teenagers in another, not to mention English professors writing about writers writing, and everyone writing about sex... then one of the following is true:

- (a) Diabolically—this is a plot on the part of English professors to take over the literate world and guarantee themselves eternal tenure.
- (b) Pedagogically—a new teaching aid is being developed, the novel as classroom, in which the professor is never out of sight and the student's interest is ensured by his being a character in whatever he is reading.
- (c) Fancifully—in the University of Life (the alma mater of autodidact Leopold Bloom), one is graded on one's ability to teach, write, and have sex. Since teaching is a matter of input, and writing a matter of output, the combination of the two equals sex. Therefore, education consists of sex and sex—the old double standard.
- (d) Nugatorily—none of the above.

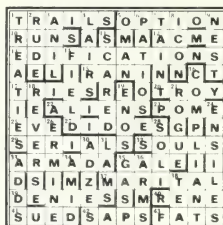
The answer, of course, is (c). For an

explanation, turn to *The Living End*, by Stanley Elkin, English professor.

Set in Heaven, Hell, and the Twin Cities (Purgatory?), *The Living End* is a comic *summa* on life and the hereafter. Its characters are the living, the dead, the horned, and the haloed, upon, above, below a world re-created by shrewd impiety. Elkin founds his irreverence on the truths of contemporary religion, that is, on the myriad inconsistencies, clichés, superstitions, and inanities derived from centuries of creative theology—blind faith leading the blind to the banana peel. All of this is done with remarkable economy, for the action is minimal and the conversation is of the luncheonette variety—a quick, brittle idiom. Imagine Job firing one-liners at Yahweh, or Joseph and Mary having a spat. The book does not, however, simply reaffirm the case for enlightened agnosticism. Elkin suggests that even after the cant is separated from the canon, Heaven is a rock, Hell a hard place, and death just the beginning of God's inhumanity to man. Fire and manna, brimstone and hilarity. Amen.

As for the multiple-choice question, the answer is (c) because shortly after the Virgin Mary discovers that she is pregnant for the second time, God explains to those on high that He did things the way He did—"Who could have gotten it all right the first time, saved everyone trouble?"—"because it makes a better story." □

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Solution to the June Puzzle Notes for "Light Switches"

In the answer to each clue, two adjacent letters were to be reversed before entering the newly created word into the diagram. Across: 1. tri(o)-als(o); 5. pot-l-on; 10. u(RN)s; 12. came(o); 13. deificat(10)ns, anagram; 15. (C)r(e)a(t)i(o)n; 17. tires, two meanings; 20. (o) ratory; 22. alines, anagram; 23. P(O)M-E; 25. vee(r); 27. diodes, anagram; 29. se(R)ails, anagram; 32. so(L)us; 33. ram-a-D.A.; 35. ga(E)l; 37. martial, homonym; 39. Denise, anagram; 40. erne, hidden; 41. used, hidden; 42. spas, anagram; 43. fast, two meanings. Down: 1. treatis(anagram)-E; 2. r(U)ed; 3. n(A)il; 4. liars, homonym; 5. m(O)an; 6. patois, reversal of "iota" in p-S; 7. Tiant, anagram; 8. CIO-n.; 9. nets, two meanings; 11. S(acre)D; 14. filed, two meanings; 16. co(m-plain)t; 18. revers, anagram; 19. cons, anagram; 21. rou(G)e; 24. enisles, hidden; 26. remine, hidden; 28. S-oil; 30. dazes, anagram of "Ze(1)da" plus S; 31. A-L-MS; 33. da(VI)ds; 34. m-aid; 35. ga(p)s; 36. R-A-ms; 38. eta, hidden.

GLOSSA

Pronunciation for diplomats

by Paul L. Berman

THIS PAST February Jimmy Carter welcomed Deng Xiaoping to the United States and in front of an estimated 200 million Chinese television viewers misidentified him as the Prime Minister of China, and mispronounced the name of Hua Guofeng. Deng, actually, is Deputy Prime Minister, and Hua, who is the real Prime Minister, pronounces his name HWA GWO-FUNG.* The incident reveals a small White House disability. Words and pronunciations fly away from this Administration the way golf balls did from Mr. Ford. It just can't be helped.

Not that Mr. Carter hasn't encouraged verbal accuracy in his subordinates. He issued a decree banning

*Deng Xiaoping is the man who used to be known as Teng Hsiao-ping, and Hua Guofeng is the former Hua Kuofeng. Deng, Hua, and a billion other Chinese have recently changed the spelling of their names, so far as the Western alphabet goes, though they haven't changed the pronunciation. TV, which was Mr. Carter's medium in this affair, luckily gets around the whole question of spelling.

unintelligibility in federal documents and mandating the use of English, which would be the most popular measure he has taken, if only people had heard of it. At one point he also promised to rid the embassies of American Ambassadors who cannot speak the language of the country they are stationed in (and who are fat and smoke cigars). Firing these fellows was an excellent idea. Events have shown that the State Department is a little rusty at translating English into exotic languages like Polish, and is at a dead loss when it comes to Chinese. Consequently we need Ambassadors who can fend for themselves. This reform has gone up in smoke, unfortunately, though of course that is how we can identify it as a reform.

The following pronunciation guide is designed to avert further Mayaguezes of the tongue. Certain names on the list belong to despots who, flickering at press time, may have already faded into history by on-sale day. Revolution almost invariably

Paul L. Berman contributes to a number of magazines.

opens new vistas of pronunciation: the modern era it has tended to away whole English tonalities stroke, as the presence on the li various Zimbabwean ecclesiastics other guerrilla leaders attests. So the names merited inclusion because of the éclat with which have already departed from ge parlance. The Shah, for inst His Highness is unlikely to rea head in many future diplomatic versations. But if by chance some bassadorial heir to Richard Hel William Sullivan should find hi called upon to utter the Imperial he ought simply to follow the structions below to think of FE OF POLICY, and the name I PAHLEVI will glide off the to like oil.

Pronunciations written in re letters are direct (though some disputable) transliterations. Pron ations in italics are close approx tions—once or twice, not so clos obvious cases only that part name that might give trouble is plained.

F. W. K. AKUFFO Head of State, Ghana	rhymes with a cuckoo (the F is for "Fred")	MEHDI BAZARGAN Prime Minister, Iran	MEH-(exhale)-dee BAH-zar
HAFAIZULLAH AMIN Prime Minister, Afghanistan	Hoff-ee-ZOO-lah a-MEAN	MENACHEM BEGIN Prime Minister, Israel	Don't KNOCK him, PRAISE
MUDAR BADRAN Prime Minister, Jordan	<i>New star anon</i>	ZULFIKAR ALI BHUTTO Pakistani martyr	ZOOL-fee-kar a-LEE BOO
AHMED HASSAN AL-BAKR President, Iraq	BOCK . . . followed by a tiny, trilled "r"	P. W. BOTHA Prime Minister, South Africa	BOAT

MALYNN CARTER President's wife	<i>Clothes-pin</i>	URHO KKKONEN President, Finland	OR-huh KECK-kone-in
OLAE CEAUȘESCU President, Romania	NEE-coal-eye Chow-SHESH-ko	U MAUNG MAUNG KHA Prime Minister, Burma	Oo Mawng
ANG CHING-KUO President, Republic of China (Taiwan, that is)	Jyong Jing Gwo	RUHOLLAH KHOMENI Iranian Ayatollah (eye a TOLL, ah)	Roo-ho-LAH Kho-MAY-knee ("Kh" as in "chutzpah")
EF JEREMIAH CHIRAU Member, Rhodesian Executive Council	Chuh-RAUW	BRUNO KREISKY Chancellor, Austria	<i>Feisty</i>
IG XIAOPING Deputy Prime Minister, China (Mainland)	Dung Show (rhymes with "cow") ping	J. T. KRUGER Minister of Justice, Police, and Prisons, South Africa	<i>Luger</i>
ARAJI DESAI Prime Minister, India	<i>Hurrah, gee, goodbye</i>	GYORGY LÁZÁR Premier, Hungary	Georgie
ANDER DUBCEK Minister, ministry of forestry, Czechoslovakia	<i>Lube-check</i>	LE DUAN First Secretary, Communist Party of Vietnam	Lay Dwahn
ONIO DOS SANTOS Prime Minister, Portugal	Douche SAHN-toosh RA-MOLL-yo ee-YAH-nezh	SEAN Ó LOINSIGH Prime Minister, Ireland	John Lynch
WARD GIEREK First Secretary, Polish Communist Party	ED-ward GEHR-ic	SAMORA MOISES MACHEL President, Mozambique	Sa-MORE-a MOISH-es Ma-SHELL
ESTO GEISEL President, Brazil	as in "geyser"	MARGRETHE II Queen, Denmark	Mar-GRATE-uh
ELI EMUNIM Israeli Nationalist Party	Gush (as in bush) Em-oo-NEEM	MOBUTU SESE SEKO President, Zaire	Mow-BOO-too SEH-see SEE-ko
ANA Part of Darkness	as in "guide," not "geese"	DANIEL ARAP MOI President, Kenya ("Ken," not "keen")	Arap as in "Arab" (it means "son of"), Moi as in "boy"
AMMAD ZIA UL-HAQ President, Pakistan	Z-ya Ool-HOCK	ROBERT MUGABE Zimbabwean guerrilla leader	as in "kimosabe"
CH HONECKER Prime Minister, East Germany	HOE-neck-er	BISHOP ABEL MUZOREWA Prime Minister, Rhodesia	Muh-zo-RAY-wah
ER HOXHA First Secretary, Albanian Party of Labor	En-vare HO-ja	AGOSTINHO NETO President, Angola	A-goosh-TEEN-you NET-too
GUOFENG (used to be Hua Kuo-Feng) Prime Minister, China	Hwa Gwo-fung	NGUGI WA THIONG'O Kenyan dissident	GOO-gie (as in "geese") Wah Thee (as in "Thebes") ONG-oh
MILTON JORDAN Presidential aide, U.S.A.	<i>Mammal interred-in</i>	NI ZHIFU (used to be Ni Chih-fu) Trade Union Chairman, China	Knee Juh-foo
OS KÁDÁR First Secretary, Hungarian Communist Party	YAH-noshe (as in "gauche")	JOSHUA NKOMO Zimbabwean guerrilla leader	En-KO-mo
ANTASTINOS KARAMANLIS Prime Minister, Greece	Konstan-DEE-noce Kar-a-mahn-LEASE	JULIUS NYERERE President, Tanzania	as in "con-TRAR-y"
NETH KAUNDA President, Zambia	<i>Marooned-a</i>	OLUSEGUN OBASANJO Head of State, Nigeria	OH-loo-suh-GUN Oh-ba-SAN-jo

GLOSSALALIA

MASAYOSHI OHIRA Prime Minister, Japan	Oh-HEAR-ah	ALFREDO STROESSNER President, Paraguay	<i>A/raid oppres</i>
JOACHIM YHOMBI OPANGO President, the Congo	Zhoh-ob-SHAM YAWM-bee Oh-PANG-go	TON DUC THANG President, Vietnam	Tun Dook (as in "book") Ta
RIZA PAHLEVI Shah of Shahs	<i>Feats of policy</i>	YUMJAGHIN TSEDENBAL Chairman, Mongolian People's Republic	<i>Toboggan foot-enth</i>
PHAM VAN DONG Premier, Vietnam	Fahm Vahn Dong	OLA ULLSTEN Prime Minister, Sweden	<i>Hoola bull</i>
AUGUSTO PINOCHET President, Chile	Aw, GOOSE-toe, Pee-no-CHET	JORGE RAFAEL VIDELA President, Argentina	WHORE-hey RAH-f Vee-DAY
CARLOS MOTA PINTO Prime Minister, Portugal	<i>Gotta bean-toe</i>	B. J. VORSTER State President, South Africa	<i>F, no</i>
MUAMMAR EL-QADDAFI Secretary General, Libya	Muh-AMMER el-Kha (the sound of "chutzpah" again) DOFF-ee	WANG DONGXING (used to be Wang Tung-hsing) Deputy Chairman, Chinese Communist Party	Wang Dung-sh
ITZHAK RABIN Israeli Labor Party Leader	IT-sock Rah-BEAN	JIGME SINGYE WANGCHUK King, Bhutan	JIG-me SING- WAHNG-ch
ZIAUR RAHMAN President, Bangladesh	ZEE-wahr Rah-MAN	EZER WEIZMAN Minister of Defense, Israel	EZ-er WIGHTS-
KARIM SANJABI Foreign Minister, Iran	Ka-REEM San-ja-BEE	U NE WIN President, Burma	Oo Nay Y
ELIAS SARKIS President, Lebanon	EH-lee-ahs Sahr-KEES	KAROL WOJTYLA The Pope	Carol Voy-TE
GEORGE SEIGNIOUS Director, U.S. Arms & Disarmament Agency	<i>Pygmy-us</i>	XINHUA (used to be Hsinhua) "Chinois," as the French Chinese news agency	
SHIITE Iran's Islamic sect	SHE-eh	XU SHIYOU (used to be Hsu Shih-yu) Member, Chinese politburo	<i>Shoo! Shee, y</i>
SUNNI The other Islamic sect, main branch	SUN-knee	XU XIANGQIAN (used to be Hsu Hsiang-chien) Defense Minister, China	Shoo Shyan-Ch
REV. NDABANINGI SITHOLE Member, Rhodesian Executive Council	Un-da-ba-NING-ghee Sih-TOLL-ee	YIGAL YADIN Deputy Prime Minister, Israel	Yee-ga-EL Ya-DE
IAN SMITH Formerly Prime Minister, Rhodesia	<i>Be-in</i>	SHEIKH AHMED ZAKY YAMANI Minister of Petroleum and Natural Resources, Saudi Arabia	Sheh-(exhale) ("chutzpah" once ago Ock-med Za-key Ya-MAH)
SOBHUZA II King, Swaziland (that's "quasi," not "Nazi")	Suh-BOOZE-ah	YE JIANYING (used to be Yeh Chien-ying) Deputy Chairman, Chinese Communist Party	Yeh Jyeh-n
ANASTASIO SOMOZA President, Nicaragua	<i>Morose, ah</i>	ZIMBABWE Rhodesia, depending	Zim-BOB-
SUNAO SONODA Foreign Minister, Japan	Sooh-NA-oh So-NO-da		

GOOD VIBRATIONS

orted on a trip through time

by John S. Peterson

SHORTLY AFTER arriving in San Francisco in the autumn of '76, I began to frequent that excellent Twenty-fourth Street book-the Antiquus Bibliopole; there I perched on a stool and browse through those most refreshing subterranean eighteenth-century gentlemen. On one particular afternoon, however, I had scarcely begun to settle into Dr. Johnson's reflections *Of usefulness* when my attention was attracted by a voice to my rear. Some- back there, a woman, had begun to peruse the Bibliopole proprietor, also a woman, about a book of hers that had been reviewed in the *Guardian*. It was a mention of the *Guardian* that rattled my snuffbox. The *Manchester Guardian*, did she say? Whatever Samuel Johnson could teach me of bashfulness, he hadn't been reviewed in the *Guardian* recently—not since the 1770s, in fact—and finally my curiosity got the better of me. The NOW reckoning, and Great Sam would have to wait. Hurriedly, I dumped my book in the self-help section and swiv- around to catch a glimpse of this and-blood contemporary who had been reviewed in the *Manchester Guardian*.

Springing back at me in a dead-level stare from across a stack of nineteenth-century gothic romances was an in- purposeful twentieth-century face. Her eyes glitter just a bit? Like, Bill Buckley's? They seemed to. I asked her my respects and then, after a brief interval, butted in. If she didn't mind my asking, what was her book

about? She didn't mind at all. Sex, came the blunt, up-front reply. I've just written the definitive work on the vibrator, she said, and from the way she said it, I knew that she had indeed. Yes, but reviewed in the *Guardian*? I wondered. Clearly I was at a loss; not so much at her subject, I don't think, as at the editorial shake-up in Manchester. Heretofore, or at least in Dr. Johnson's day, the *Manchester Guardian* had kept its commentary above the belt and I was a little taken aback. Equally confusing to an itinerant eighteenth-century gentleman was the question of how to tiptoe out of the author's magnetic field without seeming impolite. I was discovering that modern, definitive authors tend to have a withering effect on conversation, especially conversation concerning the definitive work. In their charismatic presence one felt compelled either to buy a copy of the book on the spot—something I wasn't prepared to do—or to turn the discussion to a less-precise subject, like maybe Jerry Brown.

Something of the latter sort happened here. I did learn that the writer was Joanni Blank, an up-and-coming Bay Area sexologist, and that her pamphlet, *Good Vibrations* (Down There Press), with its kind word from the *Bay* (not *Manchester*) *Guardian* had begun to move, and that was nice. I wished Ms. Blank and the vibrator community well and upon her departure I turned back to the eighteenth century only to find that the eighteenth-century shelf had locked me out. I couldn't go home again.

JUST WHY Dr. Samuel Johnson blackballed me was never made clear. Was it because I'd paid so little heed to his advice on bashfulness? Or because I'd dumped him in among R. D. Laing and the primal screamers? Either way the damage was done as was plain to see in a glance down the shelf. Addison, Steele, Swift, Pope, La Rochefoucauld, Johnson, Goldsmith, Diderot, Gibbon, and Burke had closed ranks with a vengeance. Their grim, stiff bindings signaled that I'd better turn in my snuffbox and start looking for another century, preferably my own. Dazed, I sat on my stool wondering what to do next. Whom could I turn to? Fortunately, I still had access to Voltaire, the Perfect Master, and now pulled down *Candide* for counseling. "Figure it this way," my guru wrote, "always look for the silver lining in the sorriest of traumas. Consider Dr. Johnson's tantrum a blessing in disguise, and consider your expulsion from the Church of the High Enlightenment (1776) as the act of a beneficent Providence. You have dwelt among us long enough and must now read your way back to your own time among your own kind. The journey may take you to exotic places and seem bizarre in spots, but try to remember that all works out for the best in this best of all possible worlds. Now, get the hell out before Dr. Johnson comes back with James Boswell!" Thus writ Voltaire, I swear it.

Looking to the future, I could see

John S. Peterson is a New York writer at work on a collection of travel essays.

that the trip home wouldn't be easy. The nineteenth-century shelf loomed above, massive, grotesque, a dim thick-et where ignorant romantics clashed by night. Could an eighteenth-century Huck Finn read his way across it and arrive in contemporary San Francisco with sanity intact? Only if he hustled, kept off the main roads, and didn't allow Freud, Darwin, or Marx a clear shot at him. There was no time to lose if I were to reach the Mauve Decade before dark. Max Beerbohm had said that I could crash at his place in 1899, and I would somehow thumb a ride home from there.

"Have you heard that the vibrator lady who was in here three months ago has opened a shop on Twenty-second Street?" Once again silence was breached by a woman's voice in the Antiquus Bibliopole, this one belonging to the owner. "Why no, I hadn't heard," I replied, glancing up from W. C. Fields's 1940 Presidential platform. "What does the good woman call her emporium?" "Why, Good Vibrations, of course." Of course. And at this news I was seized with a cool plumb of a thought, one worth musing aloud. If in his quest for the Presidency the magnificent Fields could somehow lose his way home from an Episcopal strawberry festival and wind up in a Los Angeles cruller factory, what was to stop some lesser fry from losing his way home from the Bibliopole and winding up in a vibrator shop? "Why, nothing is to stop him," the lady of the house remarked, "and certainly not W. C. Fields. He'd love it and so would I. When are you going?"

An excellent question. Days passed, and then weeks and months, but, to the vast annoyance of W. C. Fields's shade, I always managed to run straight home from the Bibliopole, never once getting lost or stopping to talk to strangers in trench coats. But then, finally, two days before I was due to leave San Francisco for good, my hand was forced. I had deposited a last load of wash in a Twenty-fourth Street laundromat and gone up to perform my concluding ritual at the Bibliopole. Robert Benchley looked especially promising that day, but I had scarcely begun to investigate "The Social Life of the Newt" when I was reminded of my prior commitment to the Bulbous One. Would I have W. C. Fields think me a

coward? Or Voltaire? Or Max Beerbohm, who so kindly put me up in 1899? It was now or never for Good Vibrations, the Bibliopole proprietor suggested, and of course she was right. With a sigh I buttoned my jacket, fortified myself with a pistachio cone from Bud's, and set off for the vibrator shop.

GOOD VIBRATIONS was in the Mission district near the corner of Guerrero and Twenty-second. Ms. Blank, unfortunately, was not on the premises that afternoon, her place being taken by a young person dressed plainly, almost austere, in blue T-shirt and fatigues. She lacked the inner fire and *force majeure* I'd sensed in the definitive author, but her manner was cheering. Her name was Seema, mine was John.

Introductions made, we began a tour of the shop, commencing with an inspection of the latest in vibrator technology. Much of it came from Japan, sveltely engineered to the purpose, the hottest selling item being the Hitachi, a bargain at \$24.95. Japanese industry had obviously made great strides since 1945—probably more strides than General MacArthur would have liked. These vibrators, of course, could be put to uses other than sex, as my guide was quick to point out. To prove the point, she plugged one in and nuzzled it under my left shoulder blade, producing ecstasy there and a fierce desire in the rest of me to lie down.

But, moving along, we passed to a shelf of what at first glance appeared to be a bunch of miniature mix-masters. These, Seema intimated, were a collection of antique vibrators picked up by Joanni Blank and her partner at various garage sales around the Bay. Here was 1910 and 1920 and right on up the evolutionary scale to today's peerless Hitachi. Needless to say, I was thunderstruck by Ms. Blank's sense of history. Being something of a traditionalist myself, I could savor the knowledge that here within two feet of me sat the finest collection of vibrator lore this side of the Westinghouse archives.

Seema directed me next to the literary section. At long last I was to get a look at the definitive text that Joanni Blank brought to the Antiquus Bibliopole so many months before. A quick

skim convinced me that her c were valid, that her book was twi definitive as anything Dr. Johnson ever written. This forty-three-page crammed treatise covered it from ZZ, everything a person could po want to know about vibrators an "Art of Buzzing Off" (Self-Pl ing). I tucked a copy under my

Seema and I walked back counter, where she began to rin the sale on my copy of *Good V tions*. While she was busy with th gaze was drawn to an artific missed earlier, the yellow silk-s T-shirt on the wall. On the front was featured a mound of ants th closer range, turned out to be no but a seething mass of hominids o ing into and out of each other. I intuitively that this must have bee orgy that Woody Allen always w to emcee but never had the chan

Seema gave me my change an chatted briefly about the store an it had been doing. She mentione she had only recently begun wo there, had in fact just come off u ployment. Her mother in New City was relieved that she had la a job, but wasn't too keen on Vibrations, which she tended to e with Times Square porn-shops. S tried to tell her mom that Good was more like a groovy little c bookstore, but her mother cont to worry about her daughter in Francisco.

At the door I paused to read a lowed clipping of a review that appeared in the *Berkeley Barb* sh after the store had opened. The *Berkeley Barb* is renowned, of course, f fierce investigative reporting, an interviewer, while supportive, pu Blank through a stiffer dialectic. I or Seema's mother could have exchange, however, ended co with a chipper quip from Jo Blank: "Thanks, and as we say i sex biz, come again."

The *Berkeley Barb* could come if it liked, but I myself had to move on. I was a busy Huck Finn lots to do. I had a wash to retrieve Twenty-Fourth Street; I had F Benchley to rescue from the ne the Antiquus Bibliopole. I had to in Los Angeles, where, I had there was an excellent cruller tory.

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PUZZLE

CRAZY QUILT

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

(with acknowledgements to Albipedi-
us of *The Listener*)

This month's instructions:

Answers begin at their appropriate numbers and run horizontally or vertically as usual. However, when a grid-line is reached (grid-lines intersect the puzzle every three spaces), the light *may* be displaced by one line (horizontal lights) or one column (vertical lights) until a further grid-line is reached, and so forth. All lights are displaced at least once.

Answers include one uncommon word (8D). As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution. The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 81.

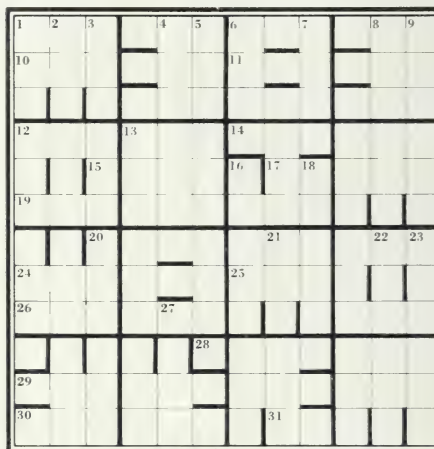
CLUES

ACROSS

1. There's little credit in stock harangue (6)
10. White hippopotamus or choice bird (12)
11. Bottle's a right inherent in nightclub (6)
12. Put up with being haphazardly grouped together (6)
13. Cut-off date is changed—morning place takes precedence (9)
14. Ingredients for bread could be left in small numbers (6)
15. Rigging on a helm provides way to get under way (7)
17. Tree snake given excellent name (5)
19. Love is... hors d'oeuvres (6)
20. Let her date misprinted stationery (10)
24. Master too restless for accommodation at sea (9)
25. Place for game; kind of court in the '50s (6)
26. Herbs in mixture—I assent (7)
28. More unsteady; more like something steady! (7)
29. Old-time humor marks initiation of house member in the afternoon (6)
30. Bridle posted again (6)
31. Joints made out back—you need kilo first (5)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Crazy Quilt, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by July 13. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to



DOWN

1. Appropriate coats for eating lobster? (12)
2. Most intimate the music is arranged with internal r... ter (9)
3. They observe ceremony recreating trial suits (10)
4. Clean the sidewalks up surrounding obscene, posh For... second Street attractions (4, 5)
5. Leftover people in strange time (7)
6. If Jay leaves happy I'll be seen (6)
7. Brief war breaks out over dog (4-2)
8. Feel terribly about Poles...this is how one gets... blubber (6)
9. The Spanish go wrong in hats and fruit (12)
13. Craft have canal flood (9)
16. Becoming exhausted—as counterpart of Pauling? (8)
18. The lady with red curl is detective (8)
21. Sound from the French fool (6)
22. Having distaste for a poem (6)
23. Those who receive time off don't look up (6)
27. Don't start "Home on the Range"—I'm sharp (4)

Harper's. The solution will be printed in the August issue. Winners' names will be printed in the September issue. Winners the May puzzle, "Free Association," are Leslie T. Carr, S. Diego, California; Shirley Cox, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania; a Frank Scalpone, New York, New York.



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10 Carlton have less
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Merit	8	0.6
Salem Lights	10	0.8
Vantage	11	0.8
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Carlton Menthol	less than 1	0.1
Carlton Box	less than 0.5	0.05



Less
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Box: Less than 0.5 mg. "tar," 0.05 mg. nicotine;
Soft Pack and Menthol: 1 mg. "tar," 0.1 mg. nicotine
av. per cigarette, FTC Report May '78. 100 mm: 5 mg.
"tar," 0.5 mg. nicotine av. per cigarette by FTC method.

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 r: A SUMMER WEEKEND

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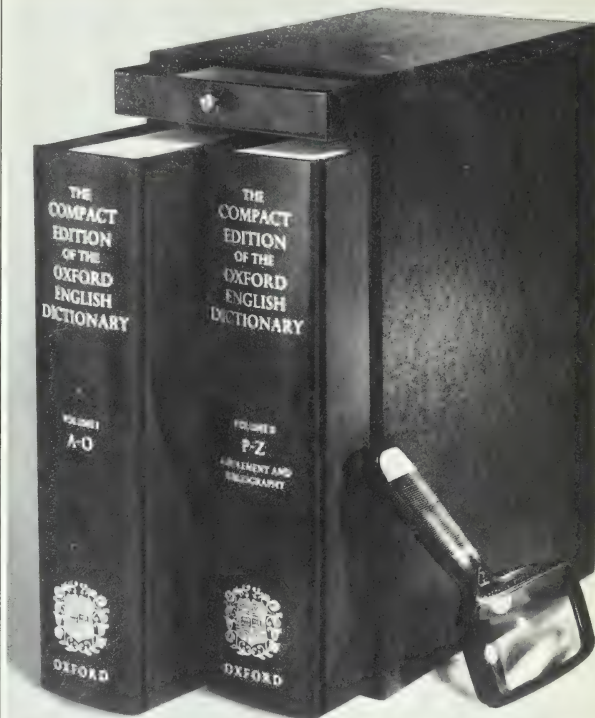
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America's freight railroads apply new technologies to reduce costs and save energy.

Harper's

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LETTERS

Cooking with gas

Tom Bethell's "The Gas Price Fix-
ers" [June] was perfect. It made more
sense about energy policy than any-
thing said during the Senate debates
on deregulation (there was no debate
in the House; under the railroad time-
table Tip O'Neill uses as rules, there
was no time).

GORDON S. JONES
Springfield, Va.

Preoccupied by the specter of inter-
state shortages and the underproduc-
tion of domestic natural-gas supplies,
all due to inadequate production in-
centives caused by government price
controls, Tom Bethell has missed see-
ing what may well be the most signif-
icant effect of all. His information
shows that low prices have conserved
domestic supplies.

This contradicts the preachments of
Dr. Schlesinger, Treasury Secretary
Blumenthal, and others in the federal
government who say that conservation
is only attainable by price deregula-
tion. Since it now seems possible that
either a high- or a low-price policy can
result in energy conservation (with the
rationing effect respectively occurring
in production or in retail sales), the
prescriptive differences can't be about
conservation. If so, then what? The
most likely answer is profits.

In the price-regulation scenario of
low ceiling prices, the profits, or sav-
ings, in energy costs don't go to cap-
ital invested in energy production but
flow elsewhere in the economy. The
opposite occurs with deregulation.

I would ask Mr. Bethell this: Can
we trust the market solution to pro-
vide an acceptable, long-term outcome
compatible with and supportive of the
American people's national interest?
Doesn't the difference between market-
place planning and national planning
compel government intervention in the
former and active prosecution of the
latter?

Now more than ever, the continua-
tion of low domestic-production price
controls for the natural-gas industry

(and, I would add, for the oil in-
dustry as well) seems a sound long-
national policy. Just possibly, the
rent mixed economy is handling the
situation well. Maybe we're wiser
than our politicians' utterances indicate.

VICTOR A. KARLSON
Camarillo,

TOM BETHELL REPLIES:

I'm afraid Victor Karlson doesn't
understand the price mechanism.
"Prescriptive difference" to which
draws attention is not about price
but shortages. When the market
prevails, there is never a shortage.
When the market mechanism is
perpetuated by low prices, shortages
result. It is true that such a policy
serves" natural gas by keeping it
under the ground, but why do this if we
are not in fact running out? We
thought we were running out because
the effects of price controls were
construed as the exhaustion of a
renewable resource."

Long-term national planning is
not for people with planning jobs, but
never works out because it is based
on current technology. If national
energy planning had been imple-
mented in the 1820s, we would still
be dependent on whale oil. Either the
plan would have been thrown away
or another example: Havana has
changed in appearance since the 1950s.
That's when Castro imposed
range planning.

Critics and reviews

Bryan Griffin ["Literary Visions,"
June] has filled nearly four pages
with a diatribe against the current cul-
ture war warming the head of
Cheever, but within a few sentences
disqualifies himself as a conscientious
critic. There is little point reading
beyond the first paragraph: the high
tone signals the serious reader that
constructive criticism is to be fore-
gone. Take this sampling, a reference
to what he sees as the stampede of
critical superlatives: "Everybody
right away that something big was

just can't say things like that
the days: it gets everybody all ex-
" This is undisguised self-glo-
tation, Griffin the super-aesthete
ing above the mindless mob. And,
ing elbow-in-the-rib sneers to his
husiness, he sprinkles his prose
a "you see" here, a "don't you
" there. Or, the palpable smirk
oozing off the page, "No, thank
We'll just take it for granted, if
may." Such verbal underlinings
nothing but a lamentable pov-
of imagination, an inability to
up with the right, forceful word
o winks to fellow snobs.
Griffin incapable of being in-
tuitive? Those who can't do, teach;
who can't teach or do, sneer.
is the point of this tirade? To
insight to Cheever? I see less than
To delve into the role of critics,
purpose of criticism? Surely not,
e lumps all critics together with
eminded disdain. His sole pur-
is to pat himself on the back as
the only non-sheep in the flock.
ad of true criticism we get lists,
ogues of the superlatives applied

to Cheever by other critics. Griffin,
though no critic, does show a talent
for library science. And I charge
Harper's as an accomplice in this
crime against serious discourse for
using valuable space to print this
pointless, negative nonsense.

HUBERT B. HERRING
New York, N.Y.

BRYAN GRIFFIN REPLIES:

As a rule, we super-aesthetic elitists
don't respond to rude letters; they
make us blush. But sometimes the
temptation to bring a little order back
into the classroom is just too great.
Mr. Herring concedes that he didn't
receive any new insight on John Chee-
ver from the article in question, and
he says he didn't learn anything new
about criticism, either. We may listen
sympathetically to these confessions,
but there's really not much we can do
to help, except to inform the corre-
spondent that "criticism," in this con-
text, may be defined as the art of
making *discriminating* evaluations of
literary works. That's what the Chee-
ver essay was all about.

Inflation's losers

Mr. von Hoffman points out that
homeowners of a few years ago are
enjoying "cheap" mortgages, but he
fails to consider that these same peo-
ple are faced with ever-increasing
costs in taxes, fuel bills, repairs, et
cetera ["Inflation's Winners," June].
He also mentions that on today's mar-
ket homeowners can more than dou-
ble their original investment, but again
he fails to mention that if they try to
buy a new home they will spend every
dime, thus leaving them with no net
gain.

MARTIN GELETER
Chicago, Ill.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

"The Passport Officer," by Basil
Bunting, as quoted in Paul Fussell's
"Border Crossings" (July), is from
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HARPER'S/AUGUST 1979



THE SHATTERED MIRROR

Bits and pieces of experience

by Lewis H. Lapham

FOR THE PAST two months in this space I have been talking about the intimidation of the American literary mind, and so it occurred to me to wonder what the spectacle of American letters might have looked like to the editor who founded *Harper's* magazine in 1850. The publisher, in his statement of intent, promised to "place within the reach of the great mass of the American people the unbounded treasures of the periodical literature." This was a noble sentiment, but the evidence suggests that it was as much of an empty boast as the newspaper advertisements placed by publishers hawking the sentimental melodrama of William Styron or Theodore White. For the first twenty years of its existence, *Harper's* relied, in the manner of the Mobil Oil Corporation and the Public Broadcasting System, on serializations of English novels, most notably the romances of Thackeray, Dickens, Trollope, and Eliot. In 1850 the United States couldn't be said to possess a literature. The country was beset by social and political confusions as loud and chaotic as those of the present. A cholera epidemic ravaged the Midwest; the first Women's Rights Convention met (to little purpose) at Seneca Falls, New York, and California gained admission to the Union. The price of an immigrant's passage in steerage from Europe stood at \$10, and on the Mississippi River 2,000 gamblers were working the steamboats. Congress passed

legislation embodying the Compromise of 1850, and by so doing it postponed the Civil War for another ten years. As an earnest of their good faith the gentlemen on Capitol Hill agreed to prohibit the selling of slaves in the District of Columbia. Even so, newspaper editors on both shores of the Potomac continued to be shot and killed for their opinions on the slavery question, presumably by people who failed to hold the First Amendment in sufficiently high regard. President Zachary Taylor died in July and was succeeded by Millard Fillmore, a President who inspired as little confidence as Jimmy Carter. It is probably safe to assume that the informed political opinion of the day predicted war, plague, catastrophe, and moral collapse.

In the literary spheres of influence the cast of the American mind was not yet as manifest as the country's territorial destiny. Poe had died in 1849, and in 1850 Emerson published his essays on great men and Hawthorne published *The Scarlet Letter*. Every other writer associated with the illuminations of nineteenth-century American literature had yet to do the work by which the century has been defined. Thoreau, age thirty-three, only recently had gone off to Walden. Lincoln was forty-one, restored to Springfield, Illinois, after a term in Congress and brooding on his failed ambition. Whitman and Melville, both in their early thirties, had yet to publish accounts of

their voyages in search of the American metaphor. Bret Harte was traveling in the Sierras, and Mark Twain, fifteen, was learning the shoals and channels downriver from Nathaniel William Dean Howells was thirty. Ambrose Bierce and William James were eight; Henry James was seven.

From whom then would the managing editor of *Harper's*, a man named Henry Raymond, have solicited manuscripts, and in what literary genres could he have hoped to recognize the evolving shape of the American imagination? In 1851 *Harper's* published a chapter from *Moby-Dick*, but the book itself was reviled by New York critics and ignored by the public. Later that same year, considerably because he despaired of finding "the unbounded treasures of periodical literature," Mr. Raymond quit the magazine and set himself the easier task by founding the *New Times*.

IN THE SUMMER of 1979, as in the autumn of 1850, the country is itself in the midst of many revolutions—in agriculture and the arts, in the social sciences, in the natural sciences, and physics, in the political and religious orders. No writer can comprehend so many changes in attitude or so many discoveries of the frontiers of the human understanding? If I were to be asked by a writer

Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of *Harper's*

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ing scholar for a book that might interpret the American mind to itself, I would be hard put to know what to recommend. I can think of treatises on particular sociologies, of statistical tables and technical abstracts, but what work of the annealing imagination? What work that might compare to Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, or Twain's *Letters from the Earth*, whose essays that might compare to those of Orwell, Johnson, La Bruyère, Swift, Voltaire, Montaigne, or Tocqueville, so often quoted because nobody has improved upon him for 100 years?

At the moment I suspect that the best work is being done by people who do not make a profession of writing, and so lately I have fallen into the habit of reading the memoirs of soldiers and the chronicles of historians, the reflections of physicists, doctors, statesmen (no matter how discredited), of almost anybody who has had some experience of a world other than the one prefabricated in the universities and cut into salable cloth by the literary guilds. A few months ago I came across Erwin Chargaff's *The Hereditarian Fire*, a book both eloquent and wise, written by a chemist familiar with the history and languages of Europe as well as with the literature of antiquity. Looking back on the burgeoning mass of scientific discovery over the past fifty years, Chargaff describes his own considerable work in biology as so much "sculpture in soap." Under the bombardment of increasingly rapid change even the concept of science dissolves: the idea of a unifying vision of nature disintegrates into the fragments of specialization. The scientist loses all hope of philosophy and dwindles into the lesser figure of "the expert," a homunculus subservient to government or foundation money, burrowing in the tunnel of a subspecialty. The imagination of the part exceeds the imagination of the whole.

The same splintering effect has forced the literary guilds to give up all hope of portraying society as a whole. No matter how quickly the scientist's theorems might be superseded or revised, he still can think that his work forms a small part in the continuum of human discovery. But who can seriously imagine that the novels of William Styron or Joseph Heller fashion of anything but a moment's pastiche? Newton's Third Law of Mechanics holds

that every action engenders an equal and opposite reaction, and perhaps this explains the timidity of contemporary American writing. The more alarming the threat or rate of change, the more insistent the denial of change. Over the past thirty years the novelists have joined together with the professors and the journalists to assure their audiences that nothing has changed, that everything remains as it was in Weimar Germany when Bertolt Brecht first discovered greed and fascism. The writers remain crouched in the poses of modernism, now become decorous and ceremonial, comforting one another with confessions of weakness, alienation, and dread. The season's heavily advertised novels, like the short stories that appear in *The New Yorker*, lull the reader to sleep in the warm bath of self-congratulation. The fashionable writers make no attempt to shift the angles of perception between the familiar and the unfamiliar and to provoke the reader to say, in the moment of startled transformation, "I had not known this: this is how it must be." The reader already has anxieties enough, and so the literary guilds seek to calm and soothe him, persuading him to nod and doze and mumble to himself. "Yes, this is what I have always known." Year after year John Updike and Kurt Vonnegut and Philip Roth write the same novel in which the same characters go to the same summer resorts and wonder about the shadows falling across the sunlit lawns of memory. Nothing changes except the names of girls, the enemy, and the band-leader. The American novel's descent into the maelstrom of the twentieth century can be measured by the distance between Melville's Ishmael and Mailer's Sagittarius. The histories of the 1920s and 1930s record that large crowds awaited the publication of a new novel by Hemingway or Fitzgerald or Dos Passos with a feeling of eagerness and anticipation, apparently in much the same way that people stood around newspaper kiosks in nineteenth-century Moscow, waiting for the next installment of *Anna Karenina* or *The Brothers Karamazov*. I find this incomprehensible. Within my lifetime I can remember nothing of a comparable excitement attending the publication of a novel by an American author. The publishers make the usual breathless announcements, seconded by the floor-

walkers touting the books in the literary reviews, but none of the novels, least none of those that I can be read) justifies the squandering of many expensive adjectives.

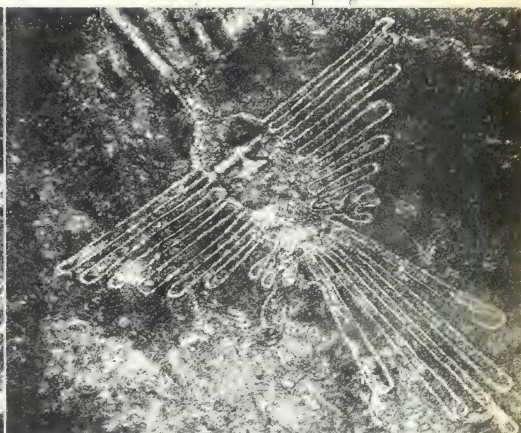
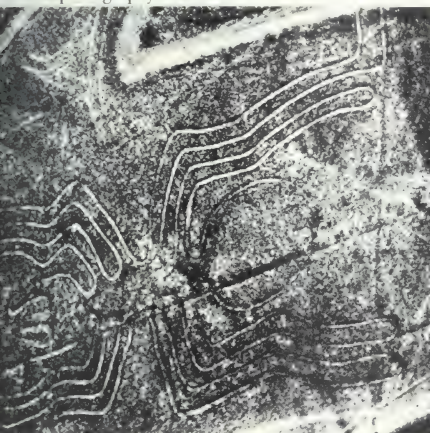
The literary guilds take no pleasure in the advancement of the mind, enterprise they regard as both dangerous and unnecessary—and their attitude suggests an analogy to Roman literature in the first century A.D. Roman eloquence was never so prized as it ceased to have any public meaning and in the first century of empire Romans contented themselves with polished rhetoric in which they only see reflected their own dignity and grandeur. Remarking on the lack of curiosity among the Roman equestrian classes, H. G. Wells described it as a phenomenon "more massive than architecture." The Romans had no interest in the world of which they were landlords, and they made no important discoveries in medicine, astronomy, or geography. As is customary with historical analogies, the parallel is not exact. The American middle classes (i.e., the readers of books sold for \$15) have a fondness for technology and a strong faith in the wonders of applied science, but they betray the Roman lack of curiosity in matters of human character and the evolution of the human mind.

THE IMPRESSIVE FAILURE of American journalism over the past thirty years follows from its unwillingness to recognize as legitimate any truth that cannot be reduced to number and weight. The country already has set forth of its quadrennial hue and cry of a presidential election, but if the press pursues its usual courses, the electorate will discover as little as possible about the character of any of the candidates. In the next fourteen months the newspapers will conduct polls, and the politicians will confer grades and prizes upon the candidates, as if rewarding grammar-school students for their memorizations of "the issues." At the end of the campaign the country will be left with slogans and phrases, as empty as the headquarters of the losing candidate through which television cameras will follow the anachronistic flight of balloons. In the



Aerial photography from 300 meters.

2000 year old Nazca pictograms, Peru.



Photos—Maurice Brasseur

Why do people do such things? Why do people read Harper's?

What motivates a people to
a message that cannot be
ed, cannot even be seen,
t from a flying machine, an
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ing scholar for a book that might interpret the American mind to itself, I would be hard put to know what to recommend. I can think of treatises on particular sociologies, of statistical tables and technical abstracts, but what work of the annealing imagination? What work that might compare to Montesquieu's *Persian Letters*, or Twain's *Letters from the Earth*, whose essays that might compare to those of Orwell, Johnson, La Bruyère, Swift, Voltaire, Montaigne, or Tocqueville, so often quoted because nobody has improved upon him for 100 years?

At the moment I suspect that the best work is being done by people who do not make a profession of writing, and so lately I have fallen into the habit of reading the memoirs of soldiers and the chronicles of historians, the reflections of physicists, doctors, statesmen (no matter how discredited), of almost anybody who has had some experience of a world other than the one prefabricated in the universities and cut into salable cloth by the literary guilds. A few months ago I came across Erwin Chargaff's *The Heraclitean Fire*, a book both eloquent and wise, written by a chemist familiar with the history and languages of Europe as well as with the literature of antiquity. Looking back on the burgeoning mass of scientific discovery over the past fifty years, Chargaff describes his own considerable work in biology as so much "sculpture in soap." Under the bombardment of increasingly rapid change even the concept of science dissolves: the idea of a unifying vision of nature disintegrates into the fragments of specialization. The scientist loses all hope of philosophy and dwindles into the lesser figure of "the expert," a homunculus subservient to government or foundation money, burrowing in the tunnel of a subspecialty. The imagination of the part exceeds the imagination of the whole.

The same splintering effect has forced the literary guilds to give up all hope of portraying society as a whole. No matter how quickly the scientist's theorems might be superseded or revised, he still can think that his work forms a small part in the continuum of human discovery. But who can seriously imagine that the novels of William Styron or Joseph Heller partake of anything but a moment's fashion? Newton's Third Law of Mechanics holds

that every action engenders an equal and opposite reaction, and perhaps this explains the timidity of contemporary American writing. The more alarming the threat or rate of change, the more insistent the denial of change. Over the past thirty years the novelists have joined together with the professors and the journalists to assure their audiences that nothing has changed, that everything remains as it was in Weimar Germany when Bertolt Brecht first discovered greed and fascism. The writers remain crouched in the poses of modernism, now become decorous and ceremonial, comforting one another with confessions of weakness, alienation, and dread. The season's heavily advertised novels, like the short stories that appear in *The New Yorker*, lull the reader to sleep in the warm bath of self-congratulation. The fashionable writers make no attempt to shift the angles of perception between the familiar and the unfamiliar and to provoke the reader to say, in the moment of startled transformation, "I had not known this: this is how it must be." The reader already has anxieties enough, and so the literary guilds seek to calm and soothe him, persuading him to nod and doze and mumble to himself, "Yes, this is what I have always known." Year after year John Updike and Kurt Vonnegut and Philip Roth write the same novel in which the same characters go to the same summer resorts and wonder about the shadows falling across the sunlit lawns of memory. Nothing changes except the names of girls, the enemy, and the band-leader. The American novel's descent into the maelstrom of the twentieth century can be measured by the distance between Melville's Ishmael and Mailer's Sagittarius. The histories of the 1920s and 1930s record that large crowds awaited the publication of a new novel by Hemingway or Fitzgerald or Dos Passos with a feeling of eagerness and anticipation, apparently in much the same way that people stood around newspaper kiosks in nineteenth-century Moscow, waiting for the next installment of *Anna Karenina* or *The Brothers Karamazov*. I find this incomprehensible. Within my lifetime I can remember nothing of a comparable excitement attending the publication of a novel by an American author. The publishers make the usual breathless announcements, seconded by the floor-

walkers touting the books in the literary reviews, but none of the novelists, least none of those that I can remember reading) justifies the squandering of many expensive adjectives.

The literary guilds take no pleasure in the advancement of the mind; they enterprise they regard as both dangerous and unnecessary—and their attitude suggests an analogy to Roman literature in the first century A.D. Roman eloquence was never so prized as it ceased to have any public meaning and in the first century of empire the Romans contented themselves with polished rhetoric in which they only see reflected their own dignity and grandeur. Remarking on the lack of curiosity among the Roman equestrian classes, H. G. Wells described it as a phenomenon "more massive than the architecture." The Romans had no interest in the world of which they were landlords, and they made no important discoveries in medicine, astronomy, or geography. As is customary with historical analogies, the parallel is not exact. The American middle classes (i.e., the readers of books sold for \$15) have a fondness for technology and a blind faith in the wonders of applied science, but they betray the Roman lack of curiosity in matters of human character and the evolution of the human mind.

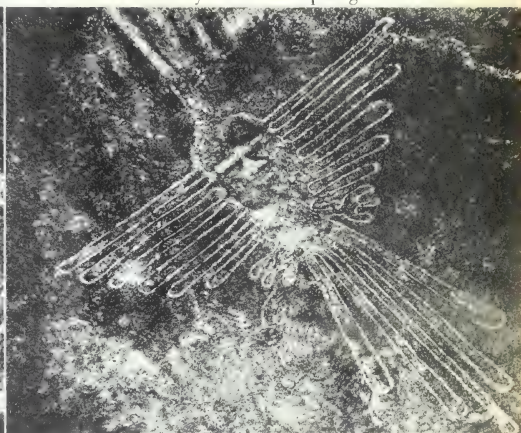
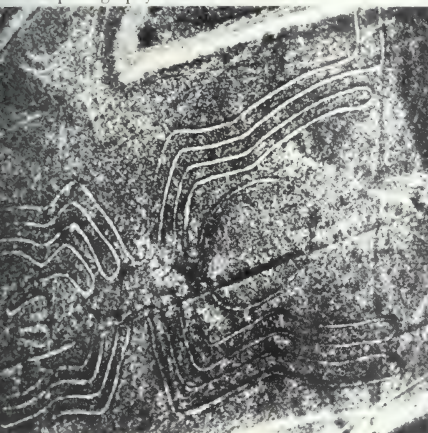
THE IMPRESSIVE FAILURE of American journalism over the past thirty years follows from its unwillingness to recognize as legitimate any truth that cannot be reduced to number and weight. The country already has set forth on a quadrennial hue and cry of a presidential election, but if the press puts its usual courses, the electorate will discover as little as possible about the character of any of the candidates. In the next fourteen months the newspapers will conduct polls, and the politicians will confer grades and upon the candidates, as if rewarding grammar-school students for their memorizations of "the issues." At the end of the campaign the country will be left with slogans and phrases, as empty as the headquarters of the losing candidate through which television cameras will follow the anachronistic flight of balloons. In the



Aerial photography from 300 meters.



2000 year old Nazca pictograms: Peru.



Photos—Marlyn Bridges

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way that the press chose to ignore for twenty years the pathological disfigurement of Richard Nixon, so also it continues to hide from itself what it doesn't want to know about Teddy Kennedy, as well as the distressing flaws of character in Mr. Carter's family and privy counselors.

Unless the journalist first translated himself into sycophant he had trouble gaining access to the more obscure levels of authority. Who would talk to the fellow except in lies and half-truths? Certainly not newspaper publishers or network executives; nobody in the investment banks, the Pentagon, the influential law firms, the White House, or the corporations. The journalist could choose between writing vicious gossip or the authorized biography. Both commodities sold in large volume, and for a period of ten or fifteen years nobody bothered to wonder about the consequences of so threadbare a discourse.

During the 1960s the so-called new journalism briefly replaced the so-called old journalism, and for a period of some years the leading lights of the age spoke of "nonfiction novels," and the "first drafts of history." The new journalism flattered the envious ignorance of both the *nouveaux riches* and the *nouveaux littéraires*. The adepts of the art made mockery of established institutions, and by so doing they comforted an audience obsessed with the great questions of status and that wanted to know, above all else, that it had no reason to feel inferior in the presence of its betters. The new journalism relied on a simplistic morality and described a world without ambiguity, in the Day-Glo colors of "60 Minutes" and *Time* magazine. The technique worked reasonably well on the margins of the society, among Hell's Angels and show-business celebrities, on tour with politicians, Jackie Onassis, and other journalists. The technique didn't work so well among people who didn't need the publicity. The present impatience with the press (*vide* the Supreme Court decision in the matter of *Herbert v. Lando* or the prior restraint placed on *The Progressive* magazine) reflects the general disappointment with the inability of the press to comprehend, much less accurately describe, the energy crisis, the nuclear accident at Three Mile Island, the Arab ascendancy, or the indebtedness of New York

City—i.e., anything more complex than an exchange of news between two celebrities seated on a peak in Acapulco.

IF NEITHER writer nor reader wants to make the effort of imagination necessary to align his accounts of the world with even the little that he can perceive of its reality, then he remains suspended in a state of artful innocence. The condition resembles the dynamic passivity of the rich. Transported from place to place at high speeds, talking incessantly about their acquisitions and travel arrangements, the American upper middle classes devote their energies to questions of technique and to the relief of boredom. A writer like Theodore White in the political balcony, or William Styron in the grandstands of sensibility, admirably exemplifies the prevailing habit of mind. On the assumption that they received their systems of ideas with the tickets of admission, they have no further cause to think. Thus they can concentrate their attention on the logistics of getting inside the White House, on the excitements of riding around in airplanes with the candidates or collecting news of the Holocaust, on the ceaseless repetition of gossip and the description of scene. But when, after prodigious labor, they find themselves in the presence of John F. Kennedy, or confronted with the implacable evil of Auschwitz, they can think of nothing to say. They have no idea what any of it means, only that it is there and somehow very, very important, and very, very glamorous or very, very sad.

Together with the rich, the *nouveaux littéraires* have seen everything once. They can afford not to look too closely at the spectacle under consideration because they assume that there always will be something else to look at—another Presidential candidate or victim of repression, another opening night or sexual revolution in California.

It is conceivable that the writers of the current generation feel themselves so overwhelmed by the achievements of the past that they cannot confront the present. Who would have the effrontery to even begin to construct a work or series of works on the order of Balzac's *Comédie humaine* or Diderot's *Encyclopédie*, or the histories of Tacitus and Thucydides? As late as the nineteenth century the writers of size,

knowing themselves to be in the midst of many revolutions, consciously undertook to engage the experience of their own time. They wrote about wars between the generations, as *Fathers and Sons* and *The Way We Live Now*; Trotsky wrote a history of the Russian Revolution, and Macaulay made so bold as to write the history of England in a way that served his own political needs and ambitions. Who has tried to make sense of New York City in the manner of Henry James or Edith Wharton? Why not, nobody since Henry Adams wrote a decent novel about the government in Washington?

Like the heirs to a great fortune, contemporary American writers dare to think that they can improve upon the miracle wrought by the fathers. They content themselves with fiction, out safaris and hunting expeditions (e.g., moving the television camera around the world in pursuit of a gorilla or a Presidential candidate with the toys and puzzles of literary experiment. Having inherited the traditional faith in technology, they imagine that they can find their way out of their boredom by means of mechanical contrivances (cf. the elaborate games constructed by Messrs. Pynchon, and Coover), and, like the outrageous child in the nursery, on a chemistry set, they take an idle delight in setting off tiny explosions. They have a talent for ingenuity rather than originality, for the very clever rather than for the inviolably profound.

We all live in the past, and the past recedes so quickly over the horizon of time that it becomes increasingly difficult to hold together the lines of connection between the generations. If the literary guilds take no interest in this enterprise, then who will? The revolutions of the next 130 years. If I consider only the changes that have occurred in my own lifetime, I cannot help noticing that when I was a child, man in his infinite ingenuity had yet to invent World War II, the jet engine, television, Auschwitz, the computer, or the hydrogen bomb. Changes over the next forty years are expected to be equally radical. The question remains as to whether they will be brought about by the arts of peace or the arts of war.

"HOW I BOUGHT A VOLVO WAGON AND LOST 1,000 POUNDS OF UGLY FAT."

By Pat Fellman, as told to Volvo.

You wouldn't know it to look at me now, but I used to be a wagon that weighed two tons and felt a block long. I thought that was the price I had to pay if you were a wife with kids, dogs and groceries to take around. One day, my oldest daughter, who had become very energy conscious, said, 'Mom, what are you doing about that big thing for? Why don't you get something smaller?' And then and there, I decided to solve this weight problem of mine. First, I looked at the little Volvo wagons. They felt tinny and unsafe. And they didn't hold up to anything. Then I looked at the Volvo 700 GLE. What a shock! It had as much room in back as a monster I'd been driving. Yet when I drove it, it handled more like my husband's sports car. It was safe, solid, maneuverable. It was easy to park. And I could lean over the steering wheel and look out of through it. Somehow, since buying that Volvo wagon, I feel more confident. Statistics show that 9 out of 10 people who have bought new Volvos are happy. Why not follow the Volvo weight reduction plan yourself? You have everything to gain.

VOLVO

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"Before: I used to have to wrestle with a beached whale. No wonder I felt tired all the time."



"This is me after losing half a ton. I feel like a new woman."

ROOMS WITHOUT WINDOWS

The death of a mailman

by Richard Selzer

NOT LONG AGO operating rooms had windows. It was a boon and a blessing in spite of the occasional fly that managed to strain through the screens and threaten our sterility. For the adventurous insect drawn to such a ravishing spectacle, a quick swat and—Presto!—the door to the next world sprang open. But for us who battled on, there was the benediction of the sky, the applause and reproach of thunder. A Divine consultation crackled in on the lightning! And at night, in emergency, there was the pomp, the longevity of the stars to deflate a surgeon's ego. It did no patient a disservice to have Heaven looking over his doctor's shoulder. I fear that, having bricked up our windows, we have lost more than the breeze: we have severed a celestial connection.

Part of my surgical training was spent in a rural hospital in eastern Connecticut. The building was situated on the slope of a modest hill. Behind it, cows grazed in a pasture. The operating theater occupied the fourth, the ultimate, floor, wherefrom huge windows looked down upon the scene. To glance up from our work and see the lovely cattle about theirs calmed the frenzy of the most temperamental of prima donnas. Intuition tells me that our patients had fewer wound infections and made speedier recoveries than those operated upon in the airless sealed boxes where now we strive. Certainly the surgeons were of a gentler stripe.

I have spent too much time in these windowless rooms. Some part of me would avoid them if it could. Still, even here, in these bloody closets, sparks fly up from the dry husks of the human body. Most go unnoticed, burn out in

an instant. But now and then they coalesce into a fire that is an inflammation in the mind of him who watches.

NOT IN LARGE CITIES, but in towns the size of ours, is it likely to happen that an undertaker will come to preside over the funeral of a close friend: a policeman will capture a burglar only to find that the miscreant is the uncle of his brother's wife. Say that a fire breaks out. The fire truck rushes to the scene; it proves to be the very house where one of the firemen was born, and the luckless man is now called on to complete, with axe and hose, the destruction of his natal place. Hardly a civic landmark, you say, but for him who gulped first air within those walls, it is a hard destiny. So it is with a hospital, which is itself a community. Its citizens: orderlies, maids, nurses, X-ray technicians, doctors, a hundred others.

A man whom I knew has died. He was the hospital mailman. It was I who presided over his death. A week ago I performed an exploratory operation upon him for Acute Surgical Abdomen. That is the name given to an illness that is unknown, and for which there is no time to make a diagnosis with tests of the blood and urine, X rays. I saw him writhing in pain, rolling from side to side, his knees drawn up, his breaths coming in short little drafts. The belly I lay the flat of my hand upon was hot to the touch. The slightest pressure of my fingers caused him to cry out—a great primitive howl of vowel and diphthong. This kind of pain owns no consonants. Only later, when the pain settles in, long and solid, only then does it grow a spine to sharpen the glottals and dentals a man can grip with his teeth and throat. Fiercely then, to hide it from his wife, his children, for the pain shames him.

In the emergency room fluid is sent into the mailman's veins. Bags of are sent for, and poured in. Oxygen piped into his nostrils, and a tube is let down into his stomach for suction. A dark, tarry yield into a jar on the wall. In an moment a second tube has sprung from his penis, carrying away urine. Such is the costume of Surgical Abdomen. In an hour I that nothing has helped him. I twist a mouse skitters, stops, then away. His slaty lips insist upon more oxygen. His blood pressure, say, is falling. I place in my earspeakers of my stethoscope, this asking Y. Always I am comforted by this ungainly little hose. It is oldest, my dearest friend. More my lucky charm. I place the disc the tense, mounding, blue-tinted gently, so as not to shock the v into commotion (those vowels!) I listen for a long time. I hear no The bowel sleeps. It plays poss the presence of the catastrophe th gulfs it. We must go to the oper room. There must be an explorat tell this to the mailman. Narcotiz nods and takes my fingers in his pressing. Thus has he given me his trust.

A woman speaks to me.

"Do your best for him, doctor. Please."

My best? An anger rises toward for the charge she has given. She cover her hand with mine.

"Yes," I say, "my best."

AN UNDERGROUND TUNNEL carates the buildings of a hospital. I accompany a stretcher that carries the man through that tunnel, cursing the thousandth time the demonic tect who placed the emergency ro

Richard Selzer, a surgeon, is the author of Confessions of a Knife, a collection of essays published this month by Simon and Schuster.

building and the operating room
other.

ch tiny ridge in the cement floor
ut from which rise and echo still
vowels of pain, new sounds that
e never heard before. Pain invents
n language. With this tongue we
s are not conversant. Never mind;
all know it in our time.

lift the mailman from the
her to the operating table. The
anesthetist is ready with still another

o to sleep, Pete," I say into his
lips so close it is almost a kiss.
n you wake up, it will all be over,
hind you."

ould not have spoken his name
! No good will come of it. The
le has peeled from me something,
a that I need. In a minute, the
of the mailman is studded with
odes. From his mouth a snorkel
to tanks of gas. Each of these
is painted a different color. One
ght green. That is for oxygen.
group behind the anesthetist, hiss-
have never come to this place
at seeing that dreadful headless
of gas tanks.

the gauze sponges paint red
across the bulging flanks of the
man, marking the area of con-
tention. They are harbingers of the
to come.

ay we go ahead?" I ask the
anesthetist.

es," he says. And I pull the scalpel
the framed skin, skirting the

There are arteries and veins to
umped, cut, tied, and cauterized,
ed fascia to divide. The details of
engage a man, hold his terror at
Beneath us now, the peritoneum.

and we are in. Hot fluid spouts
gh the small opening I have made.
gray, with flecks of black. Pan-
is! We all speak the word at
We have seen it many times be-
It is an old enemy. I open the
neum its full length. My fingers
into the purse of the belly, against
le of the issuing fluid. The pan-
is swollen, necrotic—a dead fish
ad gotten tossed in, and now lay
g across the upper abdomen. I
aw my hand.

el," I invite the others. They do,
murmur against the disease. But
do not say anything that I have
ard many times. Unlike the mail-
man who was rendered eloquent in its

presence, we others are reduced to the
commonplace at the touch of such stuff.

We suction away the fluid, which is
rich in enzymes that have escaped from
the sick pancreas. If they remain free
in the abdomen, they will digest the
tissues there, the other organs. It is the
pancreas alone that can contain them
safely. This mailman and his pancreas
—careful neighbors for fifty-two years
until the night the one turned rampant
and set fire to the house of the other.
The digestion of tissues has already
begun. Soap has formed here and there,
from the compounding of the liberated
calcium and the fat. It would be good
to place a tube (still another tube) into
the common bile duct, to siphon away
the bile that is a stimulant to the pan-
creas. At least that. We try, but we
cannot even see the approach to that
duct, so swollen is the pancreas about
it. And so we mop and suck and scour
the floors and walls of this ruined
place. Even as we do, the gutters run
with new streams of the fluid. We lay
in rubber drains and lead them to the
outside. It is all that is left to us to do.

"Zero chromic on a Lukens," I say,
and the nurse hands me the suture for
closure.

I must not say too much at the oper-
ating table. There are new medical
students here. I must take care what
sparks I let fly toward such inflamm-
able matter.

The mailman awakens in the recov-
ery room. I speak his magic name once
more.

"Pete." Again, "Pete," I call.

He sees me, gropes for my hand.

"What happens now?" he asks me.

"In a day or two, the pain will let
up," I say. "You will get better."

"Was there any . . . ?"

"No," I say, knowing. "There was
no cancer. You are clean as a whistle."

"Thank God," he whispers, and then,
"Thank you, Doctor."

It took him a week to die in fever
and pallor and pain.

IT IS THE MORNING of the autopsy.

It has been scheduled for eleven
o'clock. Together, the students and
I return from our coffee. I walk
slowly. I do not want to arrive until the
postmortem examination is well under
way. It is twenty minutes past eleven
when we enter the morgue. I pick the
mailman out at once from the others.

Damn! They have not even started.
Anger swells in me, at being forced to
face the *whole* patient again.

It isn't fair! Dismantled, he would
at least be at some remove . . . a tube of
flesh. But look! There is an aftertaste
of life in him. In his fallen mouth a
single canine tooth, perfectly em-
bedded, gleams, a badge of better days.

The pathologist is a young resident
who was once a student of mine. A tall
lanky fellow with a bushy red beard.
He wears the green pajamas of his
trade. He pulls on rubber gloves, and
turns to greet me.

"I've been waiting for you," he
smiles. "Now we can start."

He steps to the table and picks up
the large knife with which he will lay
open the body from neck to pubis. All
at once he pauses, and reaching with
his left hand, he closes the lids of the
mailman's eyes. When his hand is re-
moved, one lid comes unstuck and
slowly rises. Once more he reaches up
to press it down. This time it stays. The
gesture stuns me. My heart is pound-
ing, my head trembling. I think that
the students are watching me. Perhaps
my own heart has become visible, beat-
ing beneath this white laboratory coat.

The pathologist raises his knife.

"Wait," I say. "Do you always do
that? Close the eyes?"

He is embarrassed. He smiles faintly.
His face is beautiful, soft.

"No," he says, and shakes his head.
"But just then, I remembered that he
brought the mail each morning . . . how
his blue eyes used to twinkle."

Now he lifts the knife, and, like a
vandal looting a gallery, carves open
the body.

TO WORK in windowless rooms
is to live in a jungle where
you cannot see the sky. Be-
cause there is no sky to see,
there is no grand vision of God. In-
stead, there are the numberless frag-
mented spirits that lurk behind leaves,
beneath streams. The one is no better
than the other, no worse. Still, a man
is entitled to the temple of his prefer-
ence. Mine lies out on a prairie, won-
dering up at Heaven. Or in a many-
windowed operating room where, just
outside the panes of glass, cows graze,
and the stars shine down upon my
carpentry. □

CANNING DIRECTIONS

How the government rids itself of troublemakers

by David W. Ewing

RECENTLY, the Carter Administration introduced some long-awaited reforms in the Civil Service. During his 1976 election campaign, Mr. Carter had vowed that the black-hearted treatment of A. Ernest Fitzgerald, the Pentagon cost expert who made public his dismay at the cost overruns on the Lockheed C-5A cargo plane in the Nixon years, would never happen again if he was elected President. In keeping with this promise, Mr. Carter and his Civil Service chief, Alan K. Campbell, put through a reorganization of various Civil Service functions, in particular, the handling of complaints from non-unionized federal employees. A new agency, the Merit System Protection Board, staffed by three Presidential appointees and blessed with independence from Civil Service operations, would hear and investigate appeals from civil servants who believed themselves to be the victims of scabrous treatment.

The Administration gets high marks for a good try. Alas, however, the new agency might as well attempt a match with the chess champion of Russia—the bureaucrats know all the moves. What is more, they are accomplished in destroying any attack on their prerogatives with scarcely a sound or a ripple. They can dispatch a troublesome civil servant with a grace and aplomb that would excite the admiration of Alan May, a little-known hero of the Nixon Administration. In Mr. Nixon's Presidential campaign in 1968, Mr. May served as field director of the Republican vote-getting in Northern California. After the election he was rewarded first with a job on the Nixon

Inaugural Committee, where he oversaw the manufacture and distribution of inaugural license plates, and then with a post in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, where he concentrated on solutions to personnel problems. It was there, in 1972, that he made his seminal contribution: a manual for the guidance of administrators of federal agencies who are frustrated by recalcitrant subordinates.

The manual offers specific advice for many situations. Seniority and treachery, it seems to say, will always overcome youth and skill. It tells the harassed administrator how to dispatch an "unresponsive" agency employee: the quixotic individual who feels obliged to discourage or even publicize wrongdoing, to criticize waste, or to decline an immoral directive. Mr. May demonstrates that, while it may be necessary to comply with the letter of Civil Service regulations designed to protect dissidents, it is quite unnecessary to comply with the spirit of these impractical rules.

In 1973 Mr. May used his manual in training sessions for new personnel officials. Although not comprehensive enough to be considered a bible for the bureaucracy, the manual did assume the stature of a Letter to the Nixonians.

As with so many historic documents, May's guide survived precariously. Kept secret at first, it was "discovered" by the Senate Watergate Committee, forgotten in the clamor of Nixon's resignation, and rediscovered in 1977 by a seven-man team of investigators attached to Norman Dorsen, professor of law at New York University. The Dorsen team was studying the harassment of dissidents in the Food and Drug Administration.

One wonders why the elephantine federal bureaucracy need worry about a dissident mouse? But such is the idealism of modern agency administrators.

They are the priests of a new sort of religion. Their religion is routine, their holy place is the conference room, their bush is the Congressional appropriation. They seek salvation through proper channels of authority. They are the overriding commandment is what has been called the "Institutional Imperative," a dictum that states that even the most important action or decision of an institution must be intended to keep the institutional machinery working. Even so, the agency administrator is not distressed by dissidence because he (or she) has the power for the agency's power. He has unshakable faith that it will grow in power, and expense to the taxpayer. More generously, he fears for the dissident's atheistic soul. If he cannot save it, he must protect from its contamination the disciples who remain.

The more able the dissident, the worse the crime. Modern heretics are great concern because so many of them are M.D.'s, Ph.D.'s, C.P.A.'s, and J.D.'s. A historical parallel must be noted: In 1775 the British general Thomas Gage pardoned most of the Boston rebels but not Sam Adams. The Redcoat general found it impossible to force Adams, not because he was so virtuous but because his attacks on George's government were so devastating.

Returning now to Mr. May's manual, we find it full of concern for the dissident. Of the law. For instance, it carefully describes the sort of transfer that is a promotion according to the regulations, but one that will force the person to resign. Such solicitousness for appearances is essential to most government bureaucracies. Ironically and tragically, Mr. May himself was not sufficiently careful to observe the letter of the law and was caught. In 1977 he was

David W. Ewing, executive editor in charge of planning at Harvard Business Review, is the author of Freedom Inside the Corporation. (E. P. Dutton).

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dicted by a federal grand jury in the District of Columbia for allegedly conspiring to obstruct Civil Service regulations.

Despite his fall from grace, Mr. May has left a legacy that grows in usefulness and fecundity. Here are a few of the suppressive techniques that agency administrators may use without jeopardy.



1. Put them in brown shoes

Although government agencies were once cursed with the idealism of their employees, it is now known that unruly subalterns can be manipulated. Their weakness lies in their inability to suffer reassignment to tasks where their talents are wasted.

An example of brilliant execution of the proper technique comes from the Food and Drug Administration. In 1970 the FDA hired Dr. Carol Kennedy. A crusader for children's safety, she felt deeply about protecting children from exposure to unnecessary risks of new drugs. Soon she became critical of her superiors, who in their wisdom were less worried by these risks than she, especially when a drug company was pressing them to approve a new medication.

Although Dr. Kennedy's work was commended for technical excellence, it soon became obvious that, like Dolly in E. M. Forster's *Howard's End*, she was a good little girl but a little bit of her went a long way. Her superiors deftly transferred her to another division and assigned her to a task she had no interest in. Unable to tolerate the feeling of being a pair of brown shoes while the rest of the world was a tuxedo, she resigned.

One agency official I know, who considers himself the very model of a modern manager, says he accepts the

sinner's resignation with words like "profound regret" and "your leaving will be a loss to us all." He may even send a handwritten note of best wishes to the dissident at the farewell lunch. In his manual, Mr. May magnanimously suggests that an award might be handed to the vanquished critic.



2. Make them flies in amber

Unfortunately, not all capable dissenters are young and idealistic. Because of age or family obligations, some feel committed to serve out their careers in the agency. Since the accursed Civil Service regulations maintain that these retainers cannot be fired after years of loyal service—a protection that is scorned in private business—the only reasonable solution is to muffle them.

For twelve years the FDA made remarkably clumsy attempts to fire John Nestor, a physician whose cautious approach to the approval of new drugs irritated top management. (Suppression of dissidence is as delicate a business as French cooking and brain surgery. When it succeeds it is spectacular, but when it fails it is ghastly.) By 1972 it was too late under Civil Service rules to force Dr. Nestor to resign. Thus the FDA, as Howard Cosell might say, "applied true brilliance." It transfixed the nettlesome Nestor in an obscure division where he could bother no one.

Mr. Dorsen's team of investigators failed to see the wisdom of this strategy. They stated: "The payment of a substantial federal salary for almost no work is intolerable." The observation, of course, is not merely naive but false. The payment of a \$36,000 salary is perfectly tolerable to Dr. Nestor's former superiors, who now go their happy, prophylactic way without criticism. They needn't sign his paychecks: the taxpayer does.



3. Eliminate the

In the agency executive's bag of tricks, this one is unusual in its directness. To exercise the truculent strategy is simply to abolish the job. Thus Paulette L. Barnes, after being promised a promotion in the Environmental Protection Agency, resisted the advances of her boss, management declared the position she had held superfluous. Unfortunately, Barnes resigned and took the EPA to court: in a judgment of weak judicial resolve, the U.S. Court of Appeals decided in her favor. Nonetheless, wise officials know that few troublemakers will share Barnes's determination.



4. Stonewall

A more prolonged strategy is fiendishly clever in the right situation: to void the evidence that might support the critic's charges. For quelling the purchasing practices of the Department of Defense at a supplier in Columbus, Ohio, Ralph Applegate, a fifteen-year veteran of the department, was charged with insubordination and later fired. When congressmen sought to learn the truth about the case, the agency refused to release the information. When Applegate appealed his discharge,

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1976, a judge on the review board who requested some vital transcripts was rebuffed, and to this day the transcripts remain with the department.

The federal official with a sense of humor can exploit a similar but more witty technique: reprimand the critic; let him or her go to the expense of hiring an attorney and suffer the agonies of a long wait for a formal hearing; then, a few days before the scheduled hearing, when the dissident is tense with anticipation, suddenly and for no announced reason withdraw the charges. The top wags at the FDA used this droll method to check Dr. Alice Campbell, who had protested the safety of a new antidepressant drug being approved by the agency.

Dr. Campbell had been thoughtless and ill-mannered enough to present an unfavorable review of the drug and write a report on its clinical toxicity. In the spring of 1973, her superior handed her an official letter of reprimand. When she asked him about the letter, he refused to discuss the charges, an act that, though required by personnel procedure in the bureaucracy, we shall overlook here. After she hired an attorney and filed a formal grievance, a hearing was scheduled for September 28. Two days before the hearing, the superior rescinded his letter of reprimand and the hearing was canceled. The distraught Dr. Campbell asked, "What about the \$1,500 I spent on my lawyer's fee?" Personnel officials answered sadly that she had no recourse.

Wiser for the experience, she left the FDA the following summer.



5. Make them come unbuttoned

For officials who are amenable to delays and confusion, this technique—imported from Russia—is the solution of choice. An example comes from Foggy Bottom.

According to information released by the State Department last fall, a young black, Walter J. Thomas, filed a racial discrimination complaint while serving in the Peace Corps. Later he had the temerity to apply for a position in the Foreign Service. After passing his physical, his earlier indiscretion caught up with him: he was ordered to take the exam again. During the second exam the doctor harassed him with so many questions that he flunked for "hypertension, hyperuricemia, elevated fasting blood sugar," and other impairments. The case is being reviewed, but at last report Mr. Thomas was "broke, disillusioned, and suspicious."

One agency official put it this way: "First we drive the dissident crazy. Then we tell people not to listen to him because he's crazy."



6. Ice the pucker

An agency resentful of an employee's criticisms can cut the dissident's budget, transfer his secretary, close his office without warning, and refuse to grant further promotions. The current record for professional stasis is held by John Coplin, a supervisor employed by the Department of Agriculture. He was rising fast through the departmental hierarchy until he revealed some unethical practices in Philadelphia in 1955; in the twenty-four years since, he has served without a promotion.

7. Imitate mushroom farming

Sophisticated agency officials have discerned in the cultivation of mushrooms a lesson in management. Mushrooms are grown in cool, dark caves in a rich nitrogenous soil and, when they grow to size, are harvested. Similarly,

officials can keep the potential dissident in the dark, embed him in mire, and, as soon as he sticks his head up, cut it off.

The General Services Administration employed this technique to singular advantage in 1975. Robert Tucker, a young electrical engineer, was assigned to investigate construction contracts in Boston but was not informed of the GSA's own practice of illegal favoritism in contract awards. When he discovered the improprieties and provided his data to the FBI, he was fired. A little later, another GSA investigator, Robert Sullivan, uncovered the story and shared it with the *Boston Globe*. He, too, promptly suffered the fate of a mushroom.

Last year Messrs. Sullivan and Tucker got their jobs back as a result of an unfortunate hitch. Sullivan brought suit against the GSA. In a pretrial hearing in Boston, the judge informed the government that it had much of a case. Obviously, the judge understood neither the nequitude nor the requirements of a smoothly functioning bureaucracy. The GSA was forced to settle out of court in order to avert a worse loss of public relations.



Rey

For more than two centuries—since the time of General Gage and Sam Adams—beneficent government officials have been warning dissidents to relax, take it easy, and do as they are told. This warning has been given as it should be, without unfair discrimination. As an HEW employee recently told Florence Isbell, a reporter for the now-defunct *Civil Liberties Review*, "Being a Democrat or a Republican is just a party affiliation. 'Make Waves' is a religion."

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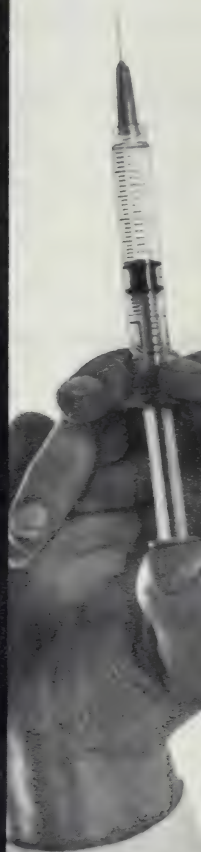


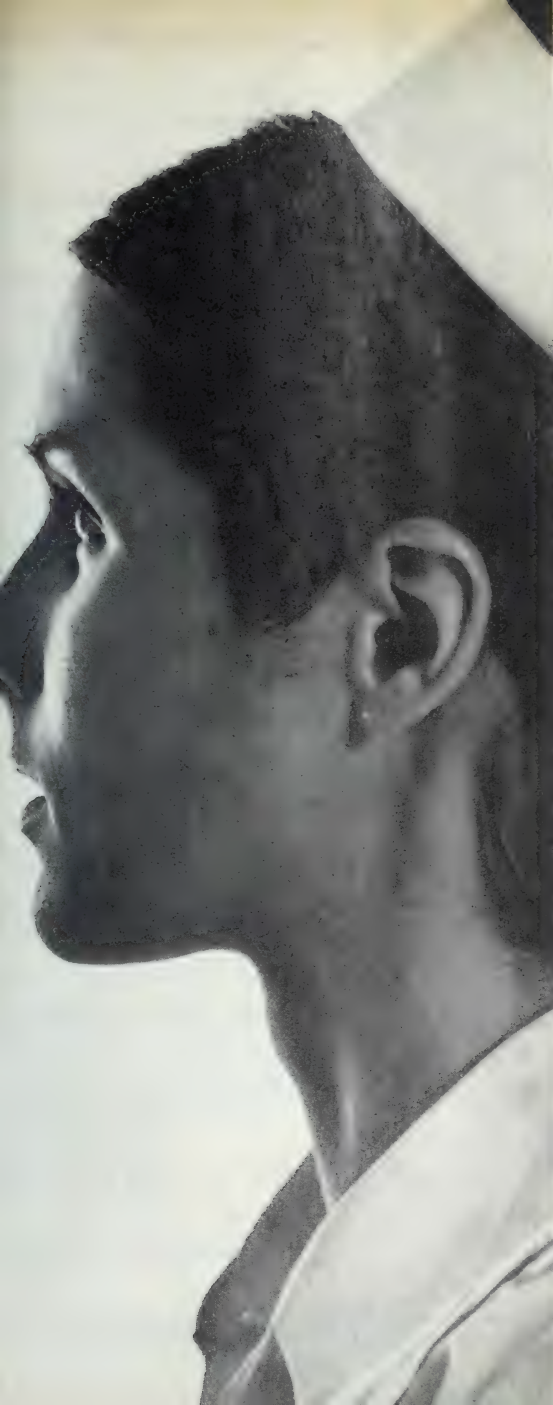
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THE HEALTH OF SCIENCE

Has American research lost its vigor?

by Daniel J. K

IN 1830 CHARLES BABBAGE published his *Reflections on the Decline of Science in England*. A distinguished mathematician and great-grandfather of the modern computer, Babbage warned that English science had lost its superiority of the Newtonian period to France and Prussia, particularly in the more abstract fields of mathematics and physics. But critics in his own day and since have pointed out that in the few decades following the publication of Babbage's book, English science was studded with luminaries, including Charles Lyell, Charles Darwin, Michael Faraday, James Prescott Joule, William Kelvin, and James Clerk Maxwell. Babbage's misperception of the state of science in the England of 1830 bears remembering amid the current claim that American science, especially basic science, is declining.

The decline is measured against a golden era for science, the quarter-century after 1945. In that period, scientists, notably physicists, commanded unparalleled status and authority in the councils of government. Washington poured exponentially increasing funds into research and development: \$15 billion a year by 1968. In the post-Sputnik decade, federal investment in basic research multiplied almost sevenfold, to some \$1.7 billion. Most of the basic research was conducted in university laboratories, where scientists were free to choose projects and hire staff, and were not obliged to justify their disbursements or satisfy demands for social utility. In return, defenders of the system argued, universities supplied the nation with advanced knowledge, trained scientists, and an unchallenged advantage in the international race for scientific and technological preeminence.

But the golden age ended in the confused passions of the 1960s. Nowadays, many scientists point to the popularity of astrology, the occult, and biorhythm calculators to argue that American culture suffers rampant anti-intellectualism. They sense that even the thoughtful public, which used to equate science with progress, now suspects that science creates more social problems than it solves. They cite statistics indicative of leaden times: a fall from about 3 percent to some 2.3 percent of the gross national product invested in research and development, and a drop in constant dollars of federal funding for research amounting to 10 percent since the post-Sputnik peak of 1968. They rehearse a litany of vexing consequences: a tight job market discourages able people from pursuing scientific careers, and the number of Ph.D.'s granted in science each year is declining; equipment in the labs is becoming obsolete; good research projects must go begging; younger faculty, anxious about tenure, often choose the safe line of research rather than the bold, adventurous one that may fail.

Spokesmen for science warn that public concern for the environment, energy, and health has focused too little attention on basic research and too much on applied research of economic or social utility. They grumble that NASA, impoverished since its Apollo heyday, spends more on space-shuttle hardware than on exploring the planets. They complain about government interference with academic autonomy, including rules for occupational safety, cost allocations, and affirmative action. Many are disturbed that Congress has been debating whether biologists ought to be restricted in experiments with recombinant DNA, and alarmed that

the City Council of Cambridge, Massachusetts, went so far as to impose a moratorium on such research. Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci's blithe remark that "we want to make nothing comes crawling out of it [at Harvard]" did not relieve the defenders of scientific freedom.

In a recent, widely quoted speech, Jerome B. Wiesner, president of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a former White House Science Adviser, summarized the apprehensions of his constituency: "The basic relationship between the federal government and the research community is floundering." The likely result: "The cutting of that sharp cutting edge of university research, both pure and applied... which helped bring the nation to world preeminence in science and technology." Dr. Wiesner's pessimism is clear and infectious. Indeed, it is becoming common wisdom that America has already begun to pay a price for inadequate research funding. How to explain that the United States has been publishing a diminishing share of the world's scientific papers; that its longstanding superiority in theoretical physics is challenged by Western Europe; that Japan and West Germany are entering a fierce competition for a share of the world's market in technology?

Yet in 1976 the U.S. trade balance in products heavily dependent on research, such as chemicals, electronics, and aircraft, reached a half times the balance in imports. In all fields of basic research, American scientific journals remain among

Daniel J. Kevles is a professor of history at the California Institute of Technology, author of *The Physicists: The Historical and Scientific Community in Modern America* (Alfred A. Knopf).

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most respected, and the rate of intellectual progress continues undiminished. For instance, not long ago Professor Chien-Shiun Wu, president of the American Physical Society, pronounced American physics, which has suffered the most serious financial cutbacks, "strong and vital" and the holder of "leading positions along nearly all of its frontiers."

SCIENCE IN AMERICA, as in Babbage's England, may suffer more from the doomsaying of a woe-begone chorus than from any palpable threat. Attempting to resolve the paradox of evident quality despite decay, contemporary American observers have invented a theory of inertia: American science remains strong only because it is living off the massive investments of the past. And, they insist, further large investments are required to maintain the nation's scientific prowess in the future. But wise attention to Babbage's mistake requires that this theory not become law merely because a consensus would have it so.

Neither logic nor history justifies taking the eminence and luxury of American science and technology in the quarter-century after 1945 as a standard of relative health. At that particular—and, one hopes, anomalous—time, Western Europe and Japan were recovering from the devastation of World War II. Since then, Western Europe, with a population of more than 300 million people and a muscular economy, has rebuilt its scientific establishment. Japan, organizing factories in the image of the family and exploiting the advantages of close cooperation between industry and government, is a corporate state with a large, well-directed research department. Before 1939 Japan was beginning to intrude in world markets, and Western Europe led the United States in science. It stands to reason that both should provide keen competition now.

From this historical perspective, the notion that America's diminished technological competitiveness bespeaks inadequate investment in research and development becomes particularly dubious. Commitment to research and development may be necessary for superior technology; it is scarcely sufficient. The translation of new knowledge into technological sales depends

on a complex interplay of, among other things, company organization, capital investment, and management and production skills, not to mention the serendipity of the market itself. The comparative American lead in science and technology may be diminishing by some measures, but it does not follow that American science is weaker—only that Western European and Japanese technical enterprises are now robust.

Domestically, the assertions of decline rest on the fall in funding for science from its apogee in the 1960s, but the retreat from the apogee has scarcely been disastrous. Given that the 1960s were decidedly vintage years for American science, consider, in dollars adjusted for inflation, certain key indicators as of 1978: total federal investment in science and technology was about that of 1963, and total public and private investment was greater than in 1968. The federal government spent more money on basic science in the universities than it did in 1967, and total public and private grants to university science were higher in 1978 than in 1967. The number of Ph.D's granted in science reached a peak in about 1971; in 1976, about as many Ph.D's were conferred upon chemists, physicists, and mathematicians as in the late 1960s.

Furthermore, the lay public is scarcely as hostile to legitimate science as some scientists think. Scientists consistently rank second only to physicians in polls of occupational prestige, and science is held in enviably high regard among the educated and affluent. Books and television specials on cosmology, geology, primatology, and biology command sizable audiences. Public debate about such issues as the environment, nuclear power, and arms control is generally well informed. These controversies have not only pitted scientists against lay Philistines; they have divided scientists themselves. Molecular biologists sounded the first tocsin about recombinant DNA. As that debate grew heated, Mayor Vellucci was not the only one to defend restrictions on research; Robert Sinsheimer, a leading molecular biologist and at the time chairman of the biology division at the California Institute of Technology, said that "to impose any limit upon freedom of inquiry is especially bitter for the scientist . . . , but science has become too potent. It is no longer enough to wave the

flag of Galileo." And a surprising number of his colleagues agreed.

Thousands of young people continue to regard science as a worthwhile career. Since 1969 the total scientific engineering work force has steadily increased; in 1977, the complement of scientists and engineers working time in research and development was at 566,000, higher than in 1969. The talent of the novitiates, it should be remembered that before World War II—comparatively lean years for scientists in terms of funding, government influence, and status—recruits to science were capable enough to place the United States to world rank. The present counts for more than number one. Einstein weighs more heavily on the advancement of physics than the thousand passable Ph.D's.

To generalize the point with a cliché, if not strictly representative simile, the scientific community has been likened to a pyramid of talent. Capped at the top by a small group of brilliant people, the pyramid descends by decreasing grades of ability to a bedrock of competent practitioners at the base. It is widely believed that scientists throughout the pyramid contribute in yeoman fashion small increments to the body of knowledge, that these increments add up to scientific progress. Scientists at the middle and lower levels do play an important indirect role in the advancement of knowledge, mainly as teachers. Historically, many accomplished American scientists were first stimulated to careers in research by teachers at liberal-arts colleges. But in research proper, a strikingly large portion of significant scientific achievement must be the work of the small group at the pyramid's apex.

A variety of statistical studies support the simile. Among the best-known is Lotka's Law, after Alfred J. Lotka, a statistician with the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company who in the 1920s showed that the number of scientists publishing a given number of papers is inversely proportional to the square of n . Thus, for every 100 authors who publish a single article in a given period of time, 25 will publish two, 10 will publish three, et cetera. Lotka's Law seems to hold across centuries and disciplines. Typically, in the late nineteenth century, one out of five American physicists published more than

five of the research articles written by the national physics community. Contemporary American physics activity follows a similar, if not so very concentrated, pattern. Equally tant, as evidenced by the authors' footnote in their research papers, exists throughout the community considerable attention to the research published by the elite at the apex hardly any to that published by the rest of their colleagues. Although physical evidence for other disciplines does not exist, in the opinion of many exists similar patterns of production and recognition hold in most

more than a century ago, faced with the task of building science in America. Joseph Henry, a distinguished physicist and the first director of the Smithsonian Institution, shrewdly recorded the strategy to pursue: "Pour material upon the apex of the pyramid of science." Today, the American scientific system, the result of a revolution of institutions and policies generally geared to encourage the most talented students by providing with first-rate training, then supporting those who excel with ample, learning opportunities for careers in research. Numerous small colleges and universities offer undergraduate training in science. But the ablest Ph.D. candidates tend to matriculate at the two or so leading graduate universities. Together with the main federal and military laboratories, these institutions are generally the best-equipped, best-financed basic-research centers in the country, and clustered there are the large majority of the country's leading research scientists.

In principle at least, access to science in America—whether admission to graduate school, appointments to research posts and professorships, or awards of federal research grants—is apportioned on the basis of merit. Science being no less human than anyone else, the system suffers from some degree of cliquishness, discrimination, sheer wrongheadedness. A prejudiced graduate adviser or perverse tenured committee can well deny talent the credit it deserves. Research-group leadership may discourage a possibly important line of work because it does not fit their own notions of useful science. But on the whole the American scientific system seems to operate

roughly in accord with the canons of meritocracy.

As a result of this emphasis on merit, the squeeze on research funds and jobs has affected with disproportionate severity the lower-ranking departments and scientists. In contrast, scientists in the more distinguished departments have generally continued to enjoy a high proportion of good graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. They report that their better students have not faced overwhelming problems in the job market and that most people who are good still get money for basic research.

One can resolve the paradox of the continuing vitality of American science amid the signs of decay, first, by noting that the decay has been grossly exaggerated; second, by recognizing that whatever the real degree of decay overall, at the heart of American science are the more capable and productive people, concentrated at the leading institutions, have remained well supported in their training, employment, and research.

WHAT, THEN, do the complaints of Dr. Wiesner and his colleagues signify? Not the decline, let alone the doom, of American science, but a loss of its post-Hiroshima position as a privileged caste. And in that loss lies the deeper meaning of the scientists' distress. Very likely, science in America, at last recognized as a powerful interest group, has entered an era of rigorous democratic scrutiny and control.

The passage is exemplified in the relationship between the scientific community and the federal government. Before World War II, many thoughtful scientists warned that federal support of research would lead to federal interference. Until about 1967, American scientists could command vast public resources and enjoy autonomy in the use of them because the public was generally willing to grant them Brahmin status. Lately, scientists have been suffering a degree of disestablishment. Their promises always to serve the public interest are no longer accepted on faith. But surely it is no sign of an

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Note: Lewis H. Lapham, our editor, won the Loeb Award last year on the subject of energy. And the same William Tucker took a special honorable mention on the subject of environmental policy. The Loeb Award is considered the Pulitzer Prize of economic journalism, and some people were surprised that Harper's would win one, let alone three.

The Overseas Press Club, Mary Hemingway Award for the best magazine reporting from abroad. To **Peter Iseman's** essay in Harper's on "The Arabian Ethos." Iseman is a distinguished linguist and scholar of the Arab world; a second article on Saudi Arabia will appear in Harper's later this year.

The Poetry Society of America, Shelley Memorial Award. To **Hayden Carruth**, Harper's poetry editor. The award has been given since 1910 to a "poet of genius, on the basis of the body of his work." Harper's is one of the few magazines to carry poetry today. We are glad that Carruth has received this recognition from his peers.

The University of Michigan has selected **Lewis H. Lapham**, the editor of Harper's, to deliver the annual Hopwood Lecture next year. The prestigious Hopwood Lecture is traditionally given by an outstanding person in American letters, most recently (1978) by Harper's contributor Tom Wolfe. Wolfe is now writing a major essay on modern architecture for Harper's; his satirical drawings appear each month in Harper's.



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HEALTH OF SCIENCE

scientific trend if scientists are now left to regulation and accountability. Other interest groups, the scientific community is being forced to enter in the politics of open debate. Rich and prominent, it can nonetheless expect constant scrutiny, from government and, inevitably, the public.

American scientists derive their power from the votes they can marshal in campaign funds they can raise, but their strategic importance as assets of critical new knowledge and expertise in applying it. That even in the new era their power remains considerable is manifest in the degree to which they can make their case felt in Washington. Academic scientists have successfully urged the bureaucracy to act on such issues as occupational safety, indirect research costs, tax exemptions for nonprofit scientific activities, and the provision for long-term commitment of outstanding young high-energy physicists. At present, they have active and sympathetic lobbyist in the White House Science Center. For the current fiscal year, President Carter requested a 5-percent increase, after inflation, in funds for research. Congress kept the real increase to about 3 percent. The new budget again exempts science from the general rule of austerity. It includes further substantial increases in funds for basic research and computer equipment, not to mention a total of \$30 billion for research and development of almost \$30 billion. about twice that for 1968.

all their continuing power, academic scientists are indeed obliged to proceed with caution. They avoid overselling—as in the case of war on cancer, which Donald R. Hardy, head of the Food and Drug Administration, has called a “medical scam”—the likely practical benefits of research. They might take greater care to avoid excessive charging of university costs to federal grant accounts. They can well upon refurbishing the national investment of research equipment, but might rely more on sharing the most costly items across institutions, states, the country, or even internationally. They may rightly insist on the importance of recruiting into science a steady number of the exceptionally talented young, but they have

no warrant to urge the extravagant proliferation of Ph.D.'s characteristic of the early 1960s.

IN THE NEW ERA, American scientists might also begin to debate the practical issue of quality in science. What is essential to safeguard American preeminence is to keep the door of opportunity open to the talented young, to supply higher education, including the small liberal-arts colleges, with able science teachers, and to provide money for exceptionally talented people to pursue research. A budget sufficient to assure every Ph.D. in science a research job or every research project funds is not essential. Such largesse may contribute to the welfare of scientists, but the farther down from the apex of the scientific pyramid the research money reaches, the more marginal—and unneeded—contributions to scientific progress will be bought.

Above all, the new era seems to demand of American scientists a change of attitude. The fact that the exponential rate of expansion characteristic of science from the 1840s to the 1960s has slowed is no evidence that the public has turned sour on science or hostile to basic research. Scientists ought not to confuse the progress of knowledge with the construction of a new wing on the lab, or to conclude that greater understanding depends necessarily on more munificent budgets. They might also be less dismayed that their international colleagues are catching up, and instead welcome the company.

Last year, Marvin L. Goldberger, a leading particle physicist and president of the California Institute of Technology, admitted that “the world will not come to an end if some important discoveries in high-energy physics are made in Europe. But,” Goldberger added, “I dislike relinquishing supremacy in a fundamental field.” No one wants to come in second. All the same, in the new democratic era, scientists and laymen alike may have to make the most difficult adjustment of all: to acknowledge that, while American science can remain among the world's best, no policy with a reasonable price tag is likely to recapture the degree of dominance enjoyed during the golden years. □

HARPER'S/AUGUST 1979

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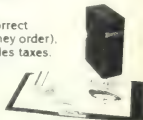
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Hiding from the bomb -again

l defense is back

by Ed Zuckerman

THE EVENT of imminent nuclear war, the Plattsburgh, New York, police department will assign two patrolmen to direct traffic at the corner of Broad and Cornelia.

That was one of the decisions made at a recent meeting in the combination basement and fallout shelter of the Plattsburgh police headquarters, one of several meetings convened to discuss the plan for evacuating Plattsburgh, site of a major Air Force base, during a nuclear crisis. Such an evacuation is expected to cause traffic problems, so the hours of one morning were set aside to consider

the plan. It was Plattsburgh police Sgt. George Rabideau who said, "You'll need at least two men there," when the intersection of Broad and Cornelia was pointed out on a map. Rabideau was sitting across from a captain sent to Plattsburgh Air Force Base and next to a bored-looking young man from the Clinton County Highway Department.

The city's civil defense planner Joseph Hein, at the head of the table, pointed out a number of other sections likely to become congested on the day of a nuclear war.

"Shouldn't we use school crossing guards?" the captain asked.

"They're too old," Rabideau said. "They couldn't do it. It's hard on the body to direct traffic."

Plattsburgh's part-time civil-defense director, a professional insurance salesman, suggested that the city's defense volunteers might be trained for the

event. Rabideau approved. "That will leave us free to deal with car accidents," he said, "or fires, or fights between individuals. People will be emotional."

Indeed they will. The Plattsburgh evacuation plan, part of the new national civil-defense program called Crisis Relocation Planning (CRP), is designed to be invoked by the President in a period of extreme tension with the Soviet Union, such as that which might accompany conventional warfare between NATO and Warsaw Pact forces in Europe. To prepare for that moment, the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency (DCPA—the national civil-defense organization now being merged into the new Federal Emergency Management Agency) has begun funding the preparation of detailed evacuation plans for every likely enemy target in the United States, on the theory put forward in a DCPA publication that "there is nothing quite so helpful as being, say, ten miles or more away from a nuclear weapon when it goes off." There is a substantial debate as to whether this theory makes any sense, but federally funded planners are already at work in every state. The Plattsburgh plan, the most advanced in New York, offers a glimpse of what they are producing.

Heading for the hills

IF YOU HAPPEN TO LIVE in north Plattsburgh, New York, and American and Russian armies are engaged in battle on the plains of Germany, you will receive on your doorstep one day, perhaps as part of your newspaper, a large pamphlet entitled "Evacuation Instructions." A prototype has already been prepared. It reads, "If a nuclear attack occurs, the area shown above would be subject to the greatest danger." By consulting a map above those

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words, you would see that the danger area includes the city and town of Plattsburgh, as well as the neighboring towns of Schuyler Falls, Beekmantown, and Peru. "All persons living in this risk area must evacuate, when ordered," the pamphlet says, "to lower-risk portions of Clinton County called 'host areas.'" A chart inside the pamphlet would show you that residents of your neighborhood were to follow "Route G" to your host area. The printed instructions would tell you to cut out the large G printed on the back page of the pamphlet (along with the letters of the other routes), place it in "the lower left-hand (Driver's Side) corner of your car windshield," and drive north on either Margaret Street or Route 87 to the Northeastern Clinton Central High School in the town of Champlain, where you would be directed to your host-area lodgings. (If you had a vacation cabin, relatives, or friends outside Plattsburgh, you would be advised to go there instead.) The prototype instructions include a list of things to take with you, among them sleeping bags, canned food, radios, shovels, credit cards, and your will. There is also a one-page primer on the effects of nuclear explosions and three pages of instructions for the building of several types of fallout shelters, ranging from a relatively comfortable basement shelter to one built by digging a ditch under your car and then loading the car with dirt. You sit in the ditch.

The full-scale Plattsburgh plan, which is not yet complete, will include lodging assignments for evacuees in public and commercial buildings (host-area homeowners will be asked to volunteer to receive guests), special arrangements for key workers who will commute back to their jobs in Plattsburgh, and arrangements for the delivery of food and other supplies to the host areas. Plans will also be made for "derelocation," in the event the crisis passes.

No plans will be made, however, to force anyone to

evacuate against his will. "If they don't want to evacuate, that's fine," said Richard Herskowitz, chief CRP planner in New York State. "We figure to 20 percent will refuse. That will make it easier for everybody else in the host areas." Those likely to refuse, one civil-defense publication estimates, will include heroin addicts, old people, "antiwar idealists" ("To them, an evacuation shelter is a protest!"), and pet lovers.

"We have had a lot of concern about pets at seminars," Herskowitz said. "We advise people to leave their pets in the basement with a couple weeks' worth of food. If you come back, your pet will still there. If the area's blasted, he had an early death."

Herskowitz spoke as he drove south from Plattsburgh to Albany. The meeting had ended and he was headed back to his office. "It's the best office I ever had," he said. "The other state offices where I've worked were all overheated or overcrowded. In the bunker, the air is fresh and clean."

"The bunker" is where he works, headquarters of the Office of Disaster Preparedness of the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs, a relic of earlier outpourings of enthusiasm for civil defense. Properly called the Emergency Operations Center and Alternate Seat of Government, it is a two-story building constructed completely underground beneath Albany's state office campus. Equipped with dormitories, food rations, independent power and water systems, radio communications equipment, and toilets with lead-proof flexible pipes, it is designed to house state officials in the event of a nuclear attack. Meanwhile, it is used as a command post during more mundane emergencies and as office space. Herskowitz's staff of three planners works in a large room with a simulated "Nuclear Detonation Report Log" along one wall. A megaton bomb, it reports, has fallen on the New York City area; 120,354 people were killed.

The \$3.5-million bunker was constructed in the early 1960s under the direction of then-Governor Nelson Rockefeller, a vigorous and early champion of civil-defense preparations. (Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru once emerged from a meeting with the governor and told reporters, "Governor Rockefeller is a very strange man. He wants to talk about is bomb shelters.") In 1964, Rockefeller proposed legislation that would have required every New York homeowner to build a fallout shelter. To promote the scheme, Rockefeller sat in a mock shelter in the window of a Manhattan bank. The idea was rejected nonetheless. Two years later, President Kennedy sparked a national shelter boom when he asked Congress for money for an ambitious shelter program and said, "Every American citizen and his community must decide for themselves whether this form of survival insurance justifies the expenditure of effort."

Released in September, 1978, by the Defense Civil Preparedness Agency, this map identifies high-risk areas on the basis of military or industrial importance as well as high population. Not all such areas would necessarily be subject to direct attack.



money. For myself, I am convinced that it is generally, if vaguely, recalled that Kennedy's campaign for shelters followed the crisis over Berlin began in June, 1961. In fact, Kennedy, whose accidental campaign had been based partly on a "missile gap," made his first major appeal for shelters in May. The crisis, however, made shelter a more urgent popular concern, at least for a time. *Life*, in a special issue, asserted that 97 percent of the population could survive a nuclear war if everyone had shelters, and it published plans for a shelter, along with a photograph of a Texas bobby-carrier sipping a Coke and talking on the phone in a state of contentment. Hammacher Schlemmer advertised a deluxe model in the *New York Times*: "protection from radioactive fallout. It is a haven from hurricanes, tornadoes, cyclones....[It] is a beautiful addition to any family's plan for pleasuring.... ideal as a den, study, or guest room." At the same time, shelter owners were quoted in the press as saying they would shoot any unwanted neighbors who tried to horn in on their peace when the bomb fell, and theologians proceeded solemnly to debate the ethics of the shot at the shelter door.

Public skepticism, Administration indecision, and congressional opponents brought the shelter boom to a halt, and by the end of the decade, civil defense was practically forgotten except by the jokers who would recall how, in elementary-school "air-raid drills," they had been instructed to climb under desks for protection from atomic bombs. Another who remembered was Walter Cronkite, who wrote, in the introduction to a 1968 anthology called *Who Speaks for Civil Defense?*, that "we are not merely prepare for the survival of individuals but also for the survival of our democratic form. To ensure that, the pre-war government had an obligation of highest priority to be certain that everything is done to preserve the post-war nation's confidence in government." Other than Cronkite wrote, nuclear war could result in "ruin."

Civil defense has now, however, come into an unusual revival. Its new emphasis on Crisis Relo-

cation Planning recalls a period in the 1950s when city evacuations were part of civil-defense plans; one justification for the interstate highway system was its use in civil-defense emergencies. Those evacuation plans were abandoned as obsolete when the Soviet Union developed intercontinental ballistic missiles, cutting nuclear attack warning time from hours to minutes. That what was obsolete then is all the rage now is just one of the odd aspects of the current civil-defense controversy. And controversy it is.

The survivor count

PROponents of CRP—or, for that matter, of any civil-defense program, now or anytime—must first overcome what they consider to be an unfair disadvantage. That is the widely held belief that, in a nuclear war, we are all going to die.

"There's a myth," said Rep. Donald Mitchell (R.-N.Y.), "that if the explosion doesn't kill you, the fire will kill you; that if the fire doesn't kill you, the 1,000-mile-per-hour winds will kill you; that if the winds don't kill you, the fallout will kill you.... We have to tell people that they *can* survive a nuclear war."

If they think they can't, of course, they're likely to think that civil defense is a stupid waste of time. This led a panel of civil-defense consultants to complain recently that peacetime civil-defense programs have been "degraded" by the rhetoric of public officials who portray a nuclear war as "almost entirely non-survivable, impossible to contemplate, or even as the 'end of the world' event."

Civil-defense advocates call this the "On the Beach mentality," after the 1957 novel that recounts the last days of the survivors of a nuclear war as they wait for deadly clouds of radiation to reach their Australian refuge.

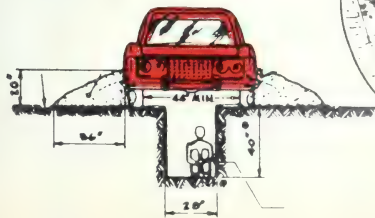
It turns out that this is probably not a realistic view. In 1974 the National Academy of Sciences undertook a study of the "long-term worldwide effects of multiple nuclear weapons detonations." It concluded that "*Homo sapiens*—but not necessarily

"Life as we know it would come to an end. We'd be huddled up in cellars with machine guns trying to protect five cans of tuna fish."

An impromptu fallout shelter may be constructed by "digging a ditch under your car and then loading the car with dirt. You sit in the ditch."

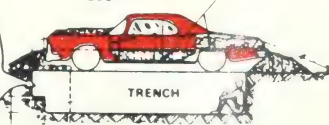


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his civilization—would survive a major nuclear exchange." Nuclear war, the report said, would bring about a major depletion of the global ozone layer, with the result that skin cancer would increase significantly and severe sunburn could occur in as little as ten minutes. But the ozone would return to normal in a "decade or two." Countries not involved in the war would also have to do without food exports from North America, and the NAS could not rule out the possibility of dramatic worldwide climatic changes. But it concluded that, in areas distant from the war, such as the Southern Hemisphere (if the bombs were confined to Russia and America), "a decade or so after the event... surviving humans and ecosystems would be subject to relatively minimal stress attributable to the exchange." As for that deadly fallout pictured in *On the Beach*, it would be "short-lived."

So Australia would live on. But what about those of us in the war zone? Millions of people in the vicinity of nuclear blasts would be instantly vaporized, and millions more would burn to death or die within days from radiation poisoning. But, federal civil-defense planners assert, 80 million or more Americans would survive the short-term effects of a massive Soviet nuclear attack tomorrow (although 30 million or so would be injured or sick), and, with the implementation of CRP, as many as 150 million could survive. Critics of civil defense do not argue with those numbers, but they echo the statement made by, of all people, Nikita Khrushchev: "The survivors would envy the dead." Says Rep. Tom Downey (D.-N.Y.), "Life as we know it would come to an end. We'd be holed up in cellars with machine guns trying to protect five cans of tuna fish."

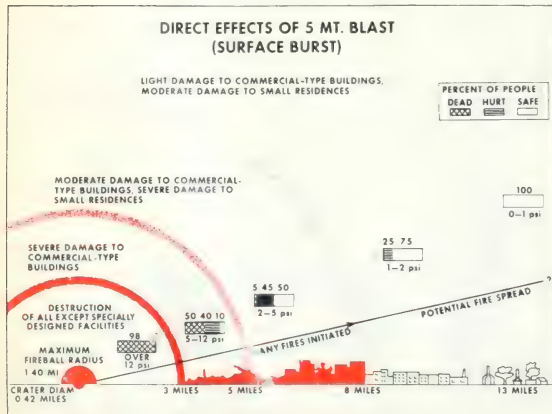
A catalogue of the survivors' problems was recently rehearsed by MIT physics professor Henry Kendall in testimony prepared for a Congressional

committee. They will face, he said, "essential complete destruction" of the nation's economic and a "devastated environment" with "significant ecological imbalances." They would therefore be prone to "deep psychic trauma...leading to marked incapacity to initiate and implement recovery activities." The telling argument against civil defense, he concluded, is that any extra survivors it created would "grossly overburden the nation's depleted agriculture and industry," the consequence of having a large civil-defense program that provided effective urban evacuation and thus was a short-term success would be to "hance the subsequent level of death and injury and make even a vestigial recovery of an industrial nation a more remote possibility."

This glum view, however, is definitely not shared by civil-defense planners, whose studies present far more optimistic picture of America after nuclear war. One DCPA staff member, citing "\$17 million" worth of studies conducted by DCPA alone between 1963 and 1973, has concluded that "no insuperable barrier to recovery has been found." A Post-Nuclear Attack Study (PONAST II), undertaken in 1972 by the Department of Defense with other government agencies, is cheery still. Based on a "computer-processed simulation" of a 1971 nuclear war, PONAST reports that 10 million Americans would survive the attack that six years after the war the economy would have recovered to such an extent that the survivors "would have approximated a 1965 per capita standard of living, except for automobile production. By the seventh year, the study says, a 1970 standard of living would have been achieved. It does not say whether new Chevrolets would be available by then.

Of course, PONAST acknowledges that postwar America would face problems. Thirty-five million of the 109 million survivors would be injured or disabled, and there would be a severe shortage of doctors. "this situation would gradually improve as injured physicians became able to care for casualties as casualties got well, or died." (A more practical, less optimistic, approach to this problem was taken by government planners in the 1950s who had stockpiling large quantities of opium for use after nuclear war.) The long-term effects of radiation, according to PONAST, would double the survival cancer rate and more than triple the number of birth defects, and the average life-span of the survivors would be shortened by four and a half years. (Another recent government report asserts, however, that the risk of a survivor's dying from nuclear war-related cancer in any given year is equivalent to the risk from smoking 300 cigarettes, spending ten hours rock-climbing.)

More food would survive than people to eat it, PONAST reports. Only 44 percent of the U.S. population would still be alive, but that would exceed



centage of surviving industrial facilities, so there would be no labor shortage. And, as for the debilitating "psychic trauma" cited by Kendall, PONAST says that "there would not be a collapse of our society." Instead, "the initial loss of confidence in government could be overcome by the prevalence of adaptive, adaptive behavior..." In conclusion, the PONAST analysis asserts that both the United States and the Soviet Union could survive, recover, and even "continue the conflict."

THE CHANCE OF such happy results would be enhanced, of course, by careful pre-war planning, and in this country that planning has been going on for well over a decade. The National Plan for Emergency Preparedness, published in 1964 and now being revised, is an unclassified compendium of post-attack activities dedicated to the goals of bringing the war "to a favorable conclusion," saving life and property, and preserving as a nation while preserving, as far as possible, individual rights, representative government, and the free-enterprise system. Among the hundreds of steps enumerated in the National Plan are the following:

Shortly after the attack, the President (circling his head in his command plane) would issue an order freezing all prices, wages, and rents.

The Post Office would distribute Emergency Food of Address cards.

Food rationing would be imposed, limiting each survivor to a weekly allotment of three pounds of meat, six eggs, seven pints of milk, four pounds of fruits and vegetables, a half-pound of fats and oils, four pounds of potatoes, and a half-pound of sweets. For purposes of substitution, one pound of meat would be considered equal to two and three-quarters pounds of potatoes, two and a half pints of milk, and one-half pound of cereal, or twelve eggs.

Efforts would be made to ensure the clearance of banks, including those drawn on destroyed banks. Plans would be made for the equitable sharing of war losses.

The Securities and Exchange Commission would work to reestablish the stock market.

A number of even more practical aspects of post-war life were delved into at a government-sponsored symposium on "Postattack Recovery from Nuclear War" in 1967. A representative of the Federal Health Service there pointed out one possible result of nuclear holocaust: it would eliminate scurvy. "We are gradually cutting it out by ascorbic acid therapy now," he said. "We are cutting it out by improved standards of living, but the city where the infections now survive and it is what would be destroyed by the attack..." Also at the symposium, a representative of the Office of Emergency Planning discussed a situation that might arise after tax assessors after World War III:

"Consider a firm whose principal assets consist of a professional football team valued, pre-attack, at about \$15 million. Suppose that the players survived the attack and that all debts of the team were fully paid up. Any plan to levy, for example, a net-worth tax post-attack must face up to the fact that this team's relative net worth in real terms is certainly not going to be the same as pre-attack."

Of course, civil-defense planners do realize that most people will have greater worries after a nuclear war than the depreciation of their football teams. A manual prepared in 1973 by the DCPA for local civil-defense planners includes, along with the advice that mosquito control efforts should begin two to four weeks after a nuclear attack, a section on "motivating the survivors." Most survivors, it says, "focus on the problem of supplying the basic needs for food, water, and shelter for the family." However, it points out, "Individual and small-group foraging and hoarding of found supplies consume available resources and do nothing to bring about future resupply." Therefore, "local authorities should take charge of critical supplies" to distribute them fairly for survival and "to provide meaningful rewards for productive work." The survivors, it says, "are apt to welcome positive action of this kind and are likely to place a high social value on opportunities to participate in activities clearly associated with improving personal and national well-being."

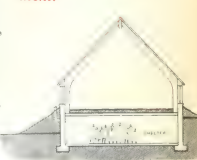
Well, perhaps. Nobody really knows what a nuclear war would be like because we've never had one. But everyone, even critics of civil defense, acknowledge that many Americans would survive, at least for a while. Whether they would survive to duel over cans of tuna fish or to work in the postwar stock exchange is a matter of debate, but survival comes first. And there, one might reasonably suppose, lies the justification for Crisis Relocation Planning—that survival is possible, and that, with CRP, more survival is possible.

But one would be wrong. CRP is only secondarily about survival. Here is the view of DCPA chief Bardyl Tirana, overseer and proponent of CRP: "I do not think CRP is, in its first instance, done to save lives once a war breaks out. It is done to help prevent a war from breaking out in the first place."

Thus, civil defense is not seen as an emergency lifesaver. It is seen as part of America's strategic deterrent. It is seen, ironically, almost as a weapon.

"If we have CRP it is unlikely that we will need it. We need it only if we don't have it. And we don't have it. So we need it."

As a fallout shelter, the basement of a church can be fortified by piling dirt on the roof (if its slope permits), against the outside walls, and on the floor over the basement.



The shelter gap

UNTIL THIS DECADE, the role of civil defense as a deterrent to nuclear war had been downgraded by American policy makers. "We will deter an enemy from making a nuclear attack only if our retaliatory power is so strong and so invulnerable that he knows he would

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be destroyed by our response," said President Kennedy in his May, 1961, address. "If we have that strength, civil defense is not needed to deter an attack. If we should ever lack it, civil defense would not be an adequate substitute."

The emphasis on retaliatory strength evolved during the 1960s into the policy known as "Mutual Assured Destruction," or MAD. On one hand, the MAD doctrine holds that if our weapons can inflict "unacceptable damage" on the Soviet Union in response to any Soviet attack, they never would dare to attack.

(Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, in characteristic fashion, attempted a quantitative definition of "unacceptable damage." It would consist, he said in 1965, of one-quarter to one-half the Russian population killed and two-thirds of Russian industrial capacity destroyed.)

The other side of MAD holds that the Soviet Union must possess the capability to destroy us. If the Soviets ever felt they were about to lose that capability (say, because America developed first-strike weapons that could destroy their retaliatory forces), it is argued that they might feel compelled to launch a preemptive strike. (Another consequence of their inability to destroy us, of course, is that we might be encouraged to start a war.) "In the interest of stability," Defense Secretary Harold Brown wrote in his annual report to Congress just this January, "we avoid the capability of eliminating the other side's deterrent, insofar as we might be able to do so."

A logical extension of the MAD doctrine has meanwhile provided an argument against civil defense, because civil defense may limit an enemy's ability to destroy you. That reasoning was in fact applied to the 1972 treaty limiting the deployment of antiballistic missiles: the treaty, according to a memo from the Joint Chiefs of Staff, was "based primarily on a philosophy of mutual vulnerability to retaliatory attack."

American civil defense, in its long post-Kennedy slump, has presented little barrier to assured destruction, but Soviet civil-defense activities have apparently proceeded from a different perspective. The Russians have, and have had for years, an ambitious civil-defense program based on public education, factory drills, blast and fallout shelter construction, encouragement of industrial dispersal and "hardening," and plans for massive urban evacuations.

The Joint Defense Committee on Defense Production concluded in 1977, after studying the Russians' civil-defense program, that all their efforts could not prevent American forces from achieving assured destruction in a war. Hawkish defense analysts and lobbyists, however, have seen cause for alarm. The Coalition for Peace Through Strength, in a position paper attacking the SALT II treaty as an "act of phased surrender," claimed that Soviet civil defenses under-

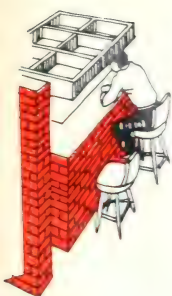
mine the credibility of American deterrence, "since it could go so far as to launch a nuclear attack against our missile bases," the paper said, while retaining enough weapons "to destroy 60 percent of all Americans if the United States were to retaliate. On the other hand, the Soviets might lose no more than 4 percent of their population because of their active civil defense. It is more likely that any U.S. President would retaliate to a Soviet first strike if the Soviet response would kill 100 million to 150 million Americans."

Short of a nuclear attack, some of the coalition members argue, the Soviet Union could block our oil supplies or invade Western Europe, "solely in the knowledge that the United States could not afford to start a nuclear war in which we would lose many more lives than they would. They would lose 10 million Soviet citizens," Representative Mitchell says. "They lost far more than that in World War II. They might be willing to take the risk."

THIS ALARMIST argument has not gone unchallenged. "We have more than 90,000 individual nuclear warheads, and that number is increasing every day," says William F. Felt, former head of the U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, recently told a House congressional committee. "Against these inescapable facts, it is, I submit, meaningless to speculate about possible discrepancies in relative fatalities. No rational leadership could subject its country to the unexampled devastation that would result from punishment for the monstrous crime of initiating a strategic nuclear war."

Moreover, it is argued that those who find Soviet civil defense so impressive have spent too much time reading Soviet civil-defense manuals (which are excellent) and too little time considering that theory would translate, or fail to translate, into practice. A lengthy analysis released last year by Rep. Les Aspin (D.-Wisc.) asserted that the Soviet civil-defense program is hampered by widespread apathy and bureaucratic incompetence, and is, within Russia, "the topic of numerous jokes." In addition, it said, Soviet shelters are inadequately stocked, Soviet evacuation plans rely to an impractical extent on millions of people walking long distances in any kind of weather, and that an American retaliatory attack, even against a dispersed Soviet population, would cripple the Soviet economy, producing widespread hunger, disease, and even revolt.

Critics of the new civil-defense boosters typically point to the fact that Soviet officials participate in our civil-defense program as justification for theirs. "[American] shelter construction rates have been increasing," Soviet civil-defense official Gen. Alexander Altunin recently wrote. "I



Built with bricks or concrete blocks, a basement snack bar can be quickly converted into a fallout shelter by lowering the false ceiling and filling the hollow spaces with more bricks or concrete blocks.

We Asked Americans:

'Should the U.S. Rely on Voluntary Programs To Save Energy?'

In a recent poll, Americans strongly supported voluntary programs to save energy:

"Should this nation's efforts to save energy rely on voluntary programs to conserve energy a great deal, a good deal, a fair amount, not too much or not at all?"

Great deal	23%	} 68%
Good deal	17%	
Fair amount	28%	
Not too much	12%	} 24%
Not at all	12%	
Don't know	8%	

Source: March 1979 national probability sample, by telephone, of 1,000 adults.
Conducted for Union Carbide by Roger Seasonwein Associates, Inc.

Two out of three support voluntary conservation.

Faced with rapidly rising energy prices and uncertain energy supplies, 68% of Americans favor using voluntary programs to save energy. The American people clearly endorse voluntary conservation to help keep energy affordable and stretch the energy resources—particularly petroleum and its products—we need for fuel and raw materials for which there are no ready substitutes. And industry has proven that voluntary conservation can do all this without the constraints of unproven mandatory programs.

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GNP growth with only 0.7% increase in energy consumption—compared to pre-embargo years when 1% more growth required 1% more energy.

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The President and Congress are facing vital decisions on energy conservation and pricing. Recognizing that perhaps the biggest boost to conservation and new energy development will come when we have realistic energy pricing, President Carter recently proposed the phased deregulation of domestic crude oil prices. Although rising energy prices will be unpopular, decontrol will be an important step toward encouraging all Americans to conserve energy resources and use them efficiently.

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Ed Zuckerman HIDING FROM THE BOMB — AGAIN

asures to enhance the stability of operation of industry and other sectors of the economy under wartime conditions are being persistently implemented. Civil defense is receiving more and more effective assistance from the U.S. Armed Forces... and the entire population is being trained in civil defense. What can be said in regard to this? The imperialists will be waiting in vain for us to sit idle in the face of such facts." Our view of Soviet programs, critics argue, is likely to be as distorted as their view of ours.

The most telling response of the civil-defense boosters to all of this is that it doesn't matter if the Soviet civil-defense system really would work: all that matters is if the Soviet leaders *think* it would, since they could be as easily led into reckless behavior by a false assumption as by a true one. This was one of the issues considered last year by an interagency intelligence task force on Soviet civil defense that produced a report released by the director of the CIA. The Soviet Union, the report said, has done far more than we have in constructing blast shelters for government leaders and key workers, and it does have plans for urban evacuations that could significantly reduce casualty figures. The goals of the civil-defense program are to limit war losses, help win the war, and then recover. And, the report says, "The Soviets almost certainly believe their present civil defenses will improve their ability to conduct military operations and will enhance the U.S.S.R.'s chances for survival following a nuclear exchange."

Nevertheless, the report concluded, none of their civil-defense measures could "prevent massive damage" from a U.S. attack, and Soviet leaders "cannot have confidence...in the degree of protection their civil defense would afford them, given the many uncertainties attendant to a nuclear exchange." In sum, it concluded, "We do not believe that the Soviets' present civil defenses would embolden them deliberately to expose the U.S.S.R. to a higher risk of nuclear attack."

Since all the arguments for increased American civil defense as a response to Soviet civil defense carry the startling implication that otherwise the Soviets might not be unwilling, in some circumstances, to risk being attacked by the entire American nuclear arsenal, that conclusion might have settled the issue. But it didn't.

Defense Secretary Harold Brown, in his report to Congress in January, wrote, "If our limited, second-strike response options are to be fully credible, our friends as well as our opponents must understand not only that we can use our strategic forces in a deliberate and controlled way against meaningful targets, but also that people at risk in potential target areas in the United States can be evacuated and protected, at a minimum, from the short-term effects of nuclear weapons."

Thus—in Pentagonese—does Brown invoke hawks' scenario of a Soviet first strike against missile silos. To prevent such an attack (if our deterrent is to be "credible"), Russia knows that we have a plan for "limited response options" (not necessarily "assured destruction" and that we have the ability to evacuate our people to protect our citizens from a Soviet *third* strike.

This is begat Crisis Relocation Planning.

CRP WAS, IN FACT, first funded at a low level by the Defense Department in 1975. It considered and rejected other civil-defense options ranging from doing nothing to building \$60 billion worth of blast shelters. One argument for CRP, of course, was that it would save lives in a war (provided we had no days' advance warning of an attack), but its strategic value has also been stressed from the beginning. "I would never contemplate our evacuation unless we knew that people were walking out of Moscow and Leningrad," DCPA director Thomas D. Mohr told a press conference last year. "I mean...it is very, very risky, and I would hope that the existence of the plan itself would diminish or negate any possibility of the Soviet Union ever using its capability or thinking that the use of its capability might be of some advantage."

In other words, the argument goes like this: we don't have CRP, the Soviet Union could evacuate its cities, do something provocative, and dare us to attack, knowing that we couldn't evacuate our cities (except spontaneously and haphazardly in preparation for their counterattack). If we have CRP, and the Soviet Union evacuates its cities and does something provocative, then we could evacuate our cities, giving the Russians a good reason to think we *would* dare to attack them, ever, since the Russians would be well aware that we have CRP and could match their evacuation with our evacuation, they would be less likely to evacuate in the first place, or, for that matter, do something provocative. Thus, if we have it, it is unlikely that we will need it. We need it if we don't have it. And we don't have it. Therefore, we need it.

Not everyone agrees with this logic. "It's a good way to spend money," Representative Aspin said. "If they evacuate, we have them in a black situation. How long can they sit out in the countryside with their cities and all their industry sitting idle?"

The entire issue was carried to the White House in late 1977, when a National Security Council working group, chaired by Samuel Huntington, director of the Center for International Affairs at Harvard, launched a policy review of civil defense. It concluded that civil defense is an element of strategic balance and that (Continued on page



Before he reenters the shelter area, a person who has been outside during a nuclear emergency should brush off any fallout particles that have collected on his clothing.



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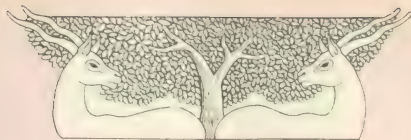


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NEON INDIA

A song celestial for rock band and sitar

by Gita Mehta

SOME SAY the action in India began with the opening of the Suez Canal, when the ladies from Hampshire and Wiltshire and other crèches of the Empire grabbed their hunters and their prayer books and set those high-buttoned boots on the ships that would sail them to the heart of the Raj.

They were the Port Out gentry, who struggled for 100 years to impress upon us that the most noble muscle in the human body was the sphincter, which should be kept tightly clenched at all times. By the time they returned Starboard Home, a whole sleepy continent had been trussed up in the great Victorian Straitjacket.

Others say the action began with the Boeing 707 and John F. Kennedy, when the Peace Corps kids came to dig tube wells in Indian Villages without taking payment in Christian baptisms.

Gita Mehta, a filmmaker and critic, is Indian and lives in London. This article is adapted from her book Karma Cola, which Simon and Schuster will publish in November.

But they were so earnest and so drab and so into three-part harmony.

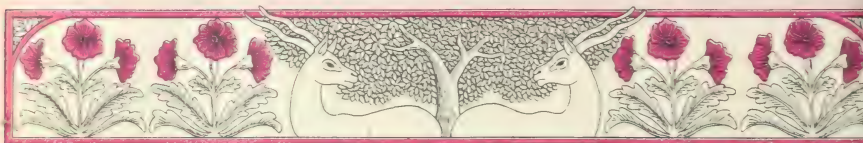
A bleak future stretched before us. It looked like we wouldn't make the twentieth century unless we spent the next few generations in the progress bus, heartily singing Row your boat gently down the stream, MERRILY merrily merrily....

Still others say the action began when that long red line of loonies came straggling in by way of Afghanistan, the Northwest Frontier, and the Punjab plains. What an entrance. Thousands and thousands of them, clashing cymbals, ringing bells, playing flutes, wearing bright colors and weird

clothes, singing, dancing, and speaking in tongues. It seemed then that the war of icons was over. One hand there were all those statues of Queen Victoria, a grumpy old lady covered in bird droppings, and on the other, this caravansary of celebrants were wiping away the proprieties of caste, race, sex by sheer stoned incomprehension.

The seduction lay in the chaos. They thought we were simple. We thought they were neon. They thought we were profound. We knew we were vincible. Everybody thought everybody else was ridiculously exotic and everybody got it wrong.

Then the real action began.



Rock to raga

WE WERE INDIANS but we had caught the contagions of the American Age.

Coca-Cola had penetrated so fast to the interior that its marketing experts were invited by our government to distribute contraceptives with the same dispatch. Speed was the essence of progress and America proved it daily.

While population control and pop culture raced hand in hand through the Indian countryside, we of the cities and the universities were getting restless, too. But just when the accelerator seemed within our reach, the unthinkable happened.

King Creole abdicated.

To Ravi Shankar and the Maharishi.

As the sitar wiped out the split-reed sax, and mantras began fouling the crystal clarity of rock 'n' roll lyrics, millions of wild-eyed Americans turned their backs on all that amazing equipment and pointed at us, screaming, "You guys! You've got it!"

Well, talk about shabby tricks.

We had been such patient wallflowers and suddenly the dance was over. Nobody wanted to shimmy.

They all wanted to do the rope trick.

The lines were kept open in spite of the political static: "Excuse me, operator, what did they say? What have we got?"

"Hello, India, my party is saying you have the Big Zero."

Mao had lost out to Maya. The revolution was dead.

So we tagged along with the Americans one time. Not because of right thought, right speech, right action, but because of the rhythm section. Never before had the Void been pursued with optimism and such razzle-dazzle. Everyone suspected that whatever America wanted, America got.

Why not Nirvana?

BUT OH, the tedium of being from the West when everything for sale was of the East.

They had promised us Arpège and given us pop music.

Into the vacuum of our unsatisfied desires great Western packaging machine had disgorged peasant skirts with hand-printed mantras, vegetable dyes, and lentil soups. Eventually we had succumbed to the fantasy that Indian goods routed through America were no longer boringly ethnic, but new and exciting accessories for the Aquarian Age.

Now we wanted to sell those fantasies, too.

From selling the fantasies it was a very short step to manufacturing them. It looks like we are about to be hoisted by our own home industry.

I know an Indian boy who used to listen to rock 'n' roll. Then he got religion. He found a guru. His guru was not opposed to progress. In fact he actively encouraged it.

One day the devotee had his hands raised in supplication when the guru said to him, "Your work is not accurate. Take it off and give it to me."

The boy did so. The guru examined the work

then returned it to the devotee. The boy was not to slide the watch back on his wrist when he needed that the watch had changed. Now it was not accurate, but it also told the time in New York. London, it had a meter for recording the depths of water, and it registered the date. The devotee was staggered. "How did you do that?" he asked the guru. "You really want to know?" his Master said. "Yes, yes, Swami, I do," the boy exclaimed. "Look at the inscription on the back," the Master smiled. The boy turned the watch over, and found engraved on his changed and wonderful timepiece the following words: "Guru Industries Ltd."

THERE WAS A TIME when people knew who were and the occasional miscomprehensions were funny. But that was way back in the Fifties when it was still possible to identify those who spoke English. In India anyway. Those of us who spoke it at all spoke in well-rounded sentences with more than a hint of Macaulayan grammar. True, the great Indian patriot Sarojini Naidu had publicly rebuked Mahatma Gandhi her "little Mickey Mouse" years ago, but Dell comics had not yet devastated our minds, leaving us easy prey to the fractured prose of America. By the Sixties, modulation had given way to acceleration. The explosive shorthand of America had become infinitely preferable to the dilatory obliqueness of England. By the Seventies, elderly Indian politicians who had never heard of the Mafia were demonstrating in Delhi Airport with placards reading KISSINGER GO HOME! and a national Indian newspaper, with perfect linguistic confidence, carried the headline FAG HAG CROONER. On the other side of the planet the world's fastest people looked for new words for slowing down. For thirty years we had burrowed in their vocabulary, scavenged in ours. Together with their own words and mellowed-outs went our *karmas*, *sadhus*, *nirvanas*, *tantras*, and *sanyas*. With language as with goods you take what you need. The British took from us *jodhpurs* and *buntings*, riding breeches and colonial cottages, words more settled times. We had taken the idiom of Latin America because it seemed to have no disillustrious provenance, a spontaneous verbalism that bridged the immediate and the immediate future. Now that America has taken our most complicated philosophical concepts as part of its every-

day slang, things are getting sticky. Whose interpretations should be accepted as final authority—the Sanskrit scholar's or the street hustler's?



Drawings by Jili Karla Schwarz

Crashing

THE WORLD CONFERENCE on the Future of Mankind was opened by the Vice-President of India, and addressed not only by Indian Yogis and Brahmacharis, but also by delegates from Nigeria, Romania, Poland, Australia, Latin America, Germany, Britain, Canada, Indonesia, the United States, the Netherlands, France, and the United Nations. Among the speakers who addressed the conference were Supreme Court judges, heads of philosophy departments, journalists, film stars, income-tax officials, nuclear physicists, Cabinet ministers, meteorologists, and maharajas. It was a gathering worthy of the great debates of the Cold War, except that the subject was no longer Communism, for and against. This time, all these people from all over the world and from every conceivable background were discussing the meaning of karma, and the significance of moral action.

At one morning session of the World Conference on the Future of Mankind, the English-speaking delegates in Committee Room B were discussing "Science and Spiritual Wisdom." After the third speaker, a meteorologist, had delivered his speech, an earnest American student stood up and asked, "Sir? Isn't science leading us deeper and deeper into the possibility of total self-annihilation? All these armories, these nuclear submarines, the hunter-killer satellites, don't they prove we're all crazy?"

The meteorologist was flanked on either side by continent ladies dressed in white saris. The ladies shook their heads and smiled compassionately at the anxious youth. The meteorologist hunched closer to the microphone. "Don't live in the shadow of death, young man," he warned. "Let us say there

is a nuclear holocaust. What will it do? I shall tell you what it will do. It will cleanse the world! Don't you understand? We are going toward a postnuclear, post-Armageddon *Golden Age!*"

The American student nodded sagely and sat down, grasping the moral significance of nuclear war for the first time.

And India acquired another willing convert to the philosophy of the meaningfully meaningless.



IS IT THE meaninglessly meaningful?

Did anyone know what was happening?

"It's the shuttle," explains an Indian painter, minimalist, of course. "We have all been buggered by the shuttle. Shuttle diplomacy. Shuttle religion. Shuttle fantasy." And at what price? Your reason? Your religion? Your health?

"I don't know," says a female German economist from Hamburg, on the lam in India for fear that she might become another Ulrike Meinhof if she goes home. "But I think they should definitely have a quality control on gurus. A lot of my friends have gone mad in India."



THE EARLY CHRISTIAN missionaries were not paranoid. Heathens do dabble in the irrational, and none more elaborately than Indian heathens, who have in their long evolution spent a couple of thousand years cultivating the transcendence of reason, another couple of thousand years on the denial of reason, and even more millennia on accepting reason but rejecting its authenticity. To be cast adrift in this whirlpool of differing views on the validity of simple mental activity seems a very high price to pay for cheap air fares.

The painter may be on to something. The speed of jet travel appears to have eliminated the distinctions between geography and philosophy. Or those between hallucination and salvation. Or those between history and mythology. Which means that although one can get anywhere, one is packing all the wrong things for simple survival, let alone for having a lovely time.



A SOUTH INDIAN REALIST has pointed out:

*When you crash in a train, there you are.
When you crash in a plane, where you are?*

An Indian doctor spoke of the sad case of a crashed American university student who had brought to him by the ground staff of Pan American Airways.

The boy, who claimed to have been a *sadhu* in the past life, had dropped a lot of acid shortly after the plane took off from Teheran airport. After half an hour, when the drug had really begun expanding his mind, he stripped off all his clothes and proceeded to streak up and down the economy section. His first streak was applauded by the young passengers. By the sixth streak people were frowning at his behavior as the long journey proceeded. The air hostesses enlisted the aid of the pursers between them they managed to get the student dressed. Two pursers sat on either side of the student, holding him down, while the captain radioed the ground staff to Delhi, requesting medical and religious assistance.

"He kept insisting he was on a nude *sadhu* trip," the doctor said. "We have a lot of these cases. They are harmless people who want a little attention more than that, they want reassurance from other human beings that they are still human beings."

"If you run naked up and down a locked airplane, you will get this reassurance."



MADEMOISELLE, how many French sons do you think there are in India at the present moment?" a French diplomat asks.

"Twenty thousand, thirty thousand?" I guess, erring on the side of exaggeration.

"Then you will be surprised to learn that by calculations on the Indian subcontinent, which includes of course Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Nepal, our figures show the presence of about 230,000 French citizens. For these we have a record. But if we calculate that there are perhaps another 20,000 French citizens here without papers. Naturally we have no record of the children who may have been born here to French citizens unless they inform us, and many of them do not. A lot of our people contact us only when they are ill or dying."

A quarter of a million French. That meant many Americans, Germans, Scandinavians, Australians, Canadians, Italians. South and Central Americans, British, Swiss, and so on? The diplomat calculated that of the 250,000 French people on the subcontinent a good 80 percent were in pursuit of either mind expansion or obscure salvations.

"The same is true of most of the other nationalities who are here in large numbers," the diplomat said, "except of course those from Russia or the East."

countries. The true misfortune is that the numbers are increasing—not decreasing—despite our efforts to teach people that things are not easy.

In recognition of the difficulties of remaining in Asia, most embassies have, over the past year or four years, acquired doctors or psychiatrists or often both, whose only function is to deal with the casualties of the great pilgrimage.

For a month I tried to meet an embassy doctor, but each rendezvous was canceled as the doctor was eventually required to accompany another casualty back to the mother country. In four weeks the doctor had flown between Europe and India a dozen times. He had been attached to the Delhi embassy for barely a month, but in that short time his feelings for those whom he accompanied—diseased, suffering from malnutrition, or trapped in inarticulate nightmares—had gone from sympathy to contempt to fear.

They are scum. What is the point of taking them home where they can infect other people with their diseases and their dirty habits? I sometimes wonder why we don't let them die here in India, where it doesn't matter."

But the doctor reluctantly ferries his fellow citizens home, making sure they remain attached to their plasma and glucose drips, and doubtless in their air lanes at 30,000 feet above sea level crossing the jets returning to India with their cargoes of alien immigrants just as firmly attached to handrails, the Indian Mental Health Association publishes one of those reports that make everyone gulp. The association's random surveys reveal that a large proportion of villagers living around major cities suffer from high anxiety. To combat nervous tension many villagers in the environs of cities such as Bombay, Delhi, Agra, Benares, and their numerous international travelers, have become dependent on drugs. Dropping uppers and downers with the best of them are the same villagers who fifteen years ago couldn't be induced to get small pox vaccinations because of their distaste for chemicals.

The walking wounded

AN ASHRAM IN INDIA habitually transplants Californian therapies to leather-padded cells on the basement of its own premises. The father of one of the most advanced touch therapies flew in from California to visit the ashram and judge at first hand the sort of success his encounter-group techniques were having in an Indian religious environment.

The matriarch of the ashram was an enthusiastic middle-aged Indian woman who appeared to have survived quite easily the change in scale from the time when the guru's entire following consisted of her and a handful of other Indians, to this mass movement encompassing twenty-two nationalities and God alone knew how many therapies.

With just a hint of malice, she told the story of an encounter-group expert's visit.

"My child, you are an Indian. It is nothing new to us that a man must rid himself of his anger if he is to understand the truth. We know how anger blinds a man. That it is fruitless energy.

"Now in this ashram we are teaching forms of *tantra*. We teach our disciples to find the roots of their own energies.

"So we are telling those who come to us, Do not be afraid. Go toward your anger. After all, if a man is obsessed with violence how will he have time for more important things?

"We have a meditation in the ashram where they beat each other. Hari Ram, what simple pleasure they get from hitting and thrashing.

"I tell you only yesterday one boy had his wrist smashed, but he is happy and it is very beautiful.

"Today, poor chap, he is in the massage meditation, he is having oil rubbed over the broken parts."

When the father of touch therapies arrived at the ashram he was asked if he would like to sit in on one of the meditations. He eagerly accepted. As a result he found himself locked into one of the leather-padded cells with eight other people, all of them armed and in a state of spiritual excitation. He had also been given a weapon, a two-foot-long cosh made of thick wood covered with rubber padding and wrapped in green cloth, green being the Indian color of peace.

The fact that he was thus armed and had personally invented these techniques for self-realization proved to be very little defense against the mystical fervor and physical determination of the other meditators. The meditation lasted one hour, during which time the doors remained firmly barred from the outside. The ashram discourages meditation *interruptus*. At the end of the session the shaken Californian savant emerged from the cell with a broken arm, appropriately terrified by the demons he had unleashed.

The matriarch found his reaction and indeed his broken arm hilarious.

"After all, what did he expect? What is he teaching in his own institutes? Our devotees are down there learning about themselves. They are not playing at violence, they are being violent so that they may exorcise, and tomorrow they may look in their mirrors and not fear themselves.

"But any fool knows that where there is violence there will definitely be injury. Now, poor fellow, he has a broken arm to remind him."

Sitting in India, the matriarch could afford to be complacent about the foolishness of visiting experts. But she was more circumspect about the Indians. The trick to being a successful guru is to be an Indian but to surround yourself with increasing numbers of non-Indians. If that is impossible, then separate your Indian followers from your Western followers in mutually exclusive camps. That way one group accepts the orgies of self-indulgence as revealed mysticism and the other group feels superior for not having been invited to attend.

An Indian who attends both camps of the ashram by virtue of being a prince and a cosmopolite was dismissive of the discourse in the English-speaking meditations. He assured me that the guru was more serious in Hindi.

"These people want toys. They are fascinated by sex and violence. They all want to feel alive. What does *feel* alive mean? I ask you. They are alive, aren't they? And what can India teach them except about death? Bhagwan gives them games and riddles. He tells them to beat each other, make love, do whatever comes into their heads. Until they are finished with these childish pastimes how will they have the concentration to learn dharma?"

Behind such contempt lies a remorseless refusal to accept responsibility for any damage done, that tranquil and implacable Eastern cruelty that lays the blame on the doer. The matriarch of the ashram that taught touch therapies had answered my questions with endearing frankness.

"But, Ma, supposing in one of your meditations I discover that I really enjoy violence and never want to give it up? Supposing I decide my karma is homicide?"

"Well, my dear, some of our devotees get these mad ideas. Then we have to do something."

"What do you do?"

"Put them in the hospital, give them pills," Ma said soothingly.

"Does the ashram have its own hospital?"

"No, no, child. The city hospital where the nurses can give them the proper treatment of injections and tranquilizers." The matriarch paused for a moment. "Sometimes they get better and come back to us. That is very beautiful."

The suspense was getting unbearable.

"Ma, what happens to those who don't get better?"

The matriarch laughed.

"Oh, them. We sedate them, put them on a plane, and send them back to their own countries. That is beautiful, too."



Lemmi

THE GALLOWS HUMOR can become infectious. I left after I learned about the reincarnation meditation. Like all the most arcane techniques taught in popular Indian ashrams, this meditation is attributed to Tibet—it being a safe bet that Chinese are unlikely to leave Lhasa, at least in lifetime.

The meditation involves staring in a mirror without blinking and without taking any notice of tears that begin streaming down the cheeks. After half an hour of this, if you haven't fainted, your past lives begin to materialize in the mirror in a series of images. The guru who teaches the technique has been at pains to point out that it is a dangerous meditation and requires great training and knowledge before it is safe to embark on it. But he has explained this to people who are determined to outdo Houdini. So they grab the nearest mirror, bar the bedroom door, and take the first step down that long journey to their past lives, without having paused to consider the connections between past and present.

I had breakfast with a survivor of this meditation. He looked like he was in great shape and riding the shazzam slalom. Unperturbed by the humidity, he had already consumed cereal, several pieces of toast, two fried eggs, and a plate of french potatoes.

"After a while your face just melts away. You concentrating so hard on not shutting your eyes you begin to get really dizzy."

He wiped his mouth, belched, and poured himself a cup of coffee. "Then you begin to see pictures. You're in all the pictures yourself, but sometimes you see pictures of people you know, your parents, or close friends."

"It's kinda nice for your ego, running a m

which you're always the star. But it can be dy-
ite for some people. I personally knew one girl
went nuts doing it."

He sipped his coffee thoughtfully. "Who knows?
be she was crazy anyway. See, she did the med-
on with her husband. They were up in their
room with their mirrors. Suddenly she starts go-
crazy, pulling her hair out by its roots and stuff.
at she saw was that she had been her husband's
er in the life just before this one.

Heavy, huh?

She actually saw herself giving birth to him and
st-feeding him and everything. Sent her round
bend. Completely schiz. Nobody, not even the
t, could make her snap out of the guilt of how
was an incestuous mother, having children by
own son. Spooked her husband, too. I think
s in a bin somewhere in the Midwest now.
her learned what happened to him or the kids."
thanked him for the coffee and got up to leave.
pulled me down.

Hey, don't you want to know what I saw in my
?"

Of course," I said, and sat down, acutely con-
as of my bad manners.

Well, I looked in that mirror and what I saw
about wiped me away. But it was great. It made
know I had done the right thing coming to In-
and staying in this ashram for four years and
ring these dumb orange dresses." He was mo-
tarily overcome with emotion. He put his arms
and me, smothering me in a bear hug.

Do you know who I have been?" he bellowed
inches past my left ear.

Who?" I inquired, muffled in his saffron-cov-
collarbone.

The Buddha's charioteer. I drove the Buddha to
destiny. Beat that!"

A YOUNG INDIAN WOMAN of "good family"
terrified when six Delhi constables arrived at
parents' house at three o'clock in the morning
rest her for the murder of a Dutch millionaire.
We know you and your friends are responsi-
ble the Delhi police said.

But why?" she asked, while her parents stood
stunned into silence. "He was a friend for two
s. What motive could we have?"

How should we know why you killed him? That
r you to reply. All we know is that you had din-
with this man. You left the house at midnight.
hours later the servant found him in the bath-
n. Dead."

"But he was perfectly all right when we left
him," the girl whispered.

"If he was all right, then what was the dead man
doing in the bathroom, naked in front of the com-
mode?" the senior police officer asked sternly.

"Naked on the commode!" the girl's mother ex-
claimed in horror.

"Not on the commode," corrected the officer. "In
front of it. Fallen forward onto his knees and chin,
holding a book in his left hand."

The young Indian woman abruptly took the in-
terrogation into her own hands. "Now look here!
If I had wanted to kill my friend, I would not have
bothered to undress him. And I certainly would not
have put a book into his hand. Kindly tell me what
he was reading at the time of his death."

The police, thrown off balance by this unexpect-
ed aggression, looked hurriedly through their notes,
and passed the relevant page to the officer in charge.

The officer cleared his throat and read, "The de-
ceased was on the bathroom floor with a volume
in his left hand, opened to page 39. The title of
the volume is as follows, *The Tibetan Book of the
Dead*."

"There you are!" the Indian girl said trium-
phantly. "Who would leave such incriminating evi-
dence in their victim's hands?"

The police officer was not listening to the girl. He
was peering at the note in the file. Finally, he
looked up and asked, "Was this Dutch millionaire
by any chance Hindu-minded?"

"He was very interested in our philosophy," the
girl confirmed.

"I see," the officer said, and signaled his men out
of the house. As he reached the door, he turned
around and addressed himself to the young wom-
an's parents.

"If the deceased was Hindu-minded," the officer
observed morosely, "it is the probable cause of
death."

The girl later told me that the Dutch millionaire
had died of terminal cancer. Nevertheless, the Delhi
police had made an accurate deduction. Philosophy
can sometimes be as lethal as cancer.

Transcendental somersaults

THE PRINCIPLE OF KARMA is a bad choice for
narcosis. The Karmic Law would seem to suggest that
there is no heaven, only a series of life sentences,
and that salvation occurs not in an afterlife paradise
but with a successful death. For us eternal life is
death—not in the bosom of Jesus—but just death,
no more being born again to endure life again to
die again. Yet people come in ever-increasing num-

bers to India to be born again with the conviction that in their rebirth they will relearn to live.

At the heart of all our celebrations, which are still lively and colorful, is the realization that we are at a wake. But the tourists we draw because of that color and that liveliness appear to think that they are at a christening. We hope that progress, inquiry, as defined by the West, may somehow free us from the constraints of having to be endlessly cross-eyed, having to see the finite and the infinite in everything. But it is precisely this business of being cross-eyed that so attracts the outsider. Only he finds the spiritual squint attractive because he is doing the squinting, it is he as the philosopher and not as the victim of the philosophy that permits him to be so enthusiastic.

It is unlikely that either the Occidental or the Easterner has the stamina to survive this exchange of views, yet both insist on trying and both use irrelevant language to camouflage the contradictions. The Easterner calls what fascinates him in the West economic necessity, technology, historical imperatives. The Occidental calls what fascinates him in the East the transcendence of economics and technology, the antidote to history. Both cloak the enemies of their strengths in new terminology and hope to render them harmless.

The Westerner is finding the dialectics of history less fascinating than the endless opportunities for narcissism provided by the Wisdom of the East. Except that the prime concern of the Wisdom of the East is the annihilation of narcissism.

And so on, *ad nauseam*.

IT CAN'T BE COMPLETE coincidence that Asian flu and Asian thought became epidemic in the world simultaneously. Consider for a moment the misfortune of those destined to endure the two-pronged attack. The Double Whammy. Spiritual and physical assault in unison.

Even Job had floundered under such conditions. Could one expect Spock's siblings, Kennedy's children, the *jeunesse dorée* of the Now Generation to show greater resistance? While those golden bodies were at their nadir, falling like ninepins before the Bug, the East sent in the elite corps. The parapsychical paratroops. They didn't look that dangerous in their tonsures and their sandalwood beads. But they were. Huns dressed as nuns, neo-Nazis anesthetizing the world with a new nerve gas. Attar of rose.

It seemed too easy a victory and some Indians asked why. How could the Guardians of Liberty

break ranks thus? America was a continent that made a fetish out of rebellion. Its people had to overthrow a town rather than succumb to the dictates of tyrants, despots, be they kings, priests, or latterly the Communists. Yet here were their children, in the very Land of the Free, falling easy prey to men who were demanding complete and unquestioning obedience to their commands, and who extracted payment for their privilege.

And what inspired tithing. The price of a servility could vary from a percentage of your income to your whole stash. No rebates. No reductions. No questions. An outstanding example of Taxation Without Representation. Surely such a takeover would be its success to a general debility in the host body.

Or else to the rumor that the streets of India were lined with miracles.



Mysteries of the

THE WAY THE AMERICAN's story goes, he has been this guru's disciple for two years. In that time the Master was constantly surrounded by devotees begging for help and divine intercessions with the Master. The Master acquiesced according to the promptings of his own inscrutable logic.

One day the American disciple was with the Master when he was besieged by all the members of one of a large, joint Indian family. The Master's member was dead, and had been for three days. The family kept on ice in the Madras city morgue while the family handled the cremation details. But the Master, instead of organizing the ceremonies for the dead member's sendoff, was in fact here with the Master pleading that the passing on of son/father/brother/uncle/in-law/nephew had been precipitous. The Master's man's life, according to the calculations of the Master, the priests, and the family doctor, should have been cut short untimely. Could the Master correct this alarming discrepancy in dates and



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For some months now, there have been reports from the Continent about an exciting new car—"the Audi 5000's scrappy kid brother"—designed by the same team of engineers that created the 5000.

In the February issue of *Road & Track* there appeared an advance road-test report on this new car, written by R & T's "Letter from Europe" columnist (whose credentials as a driver include the winning of the LeMans 24-hour classic some years ago).

Here is what this gentleman had to say about the new Audi 4000—or the Audi 80, as it is called in Europe—after "a quick run through Germany, Switzerland, Italy and France and over several passes in the Alps, as well as over some 250 miles of motorways where the Audi cruised at around 90-100 mph..."

...a brilliant piece of engineering..."

"...when I tried the car on the 'colonial' tracks of a rival manufacturer's proving ground ... there wasn't the slightest squeak or rattle. The light weight is obtained by proper stressing of the various components of the shell and systematical weight saving where it can be done without harm to comfort, quality and strength. This is a game at which Ferdinand Piëch, who leads the Audi developmental team, was unbeatable when he designed racing cars from 1965 to 1972, and he certainly hasn't lost his touch."

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(—March "Letter from Europe" column, R & T.)

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beloved absentee from the dead?
The American was skeptical that the Master
would accede to such an outrageous demand, or
he could even pull it off. But the Master set
in the direction of the deceased, followed by a
crowd of assorted believers, disbelievers, and
saves.

At the morgue confusion reigned. Government
machinery is not, after all, equipped to deal with
the unexpected. If this occasion was successful it
might give rise to an epidemic of resurrection.
Ghosts all over the country might be deluged with
requests in a state of suspended death, awaiting the
words of passing gurus.

While these considerations were preoccupying
senior officers, the junior staff members were
experiencing a technical hitch. They could not find
a body. Unlike their bureaucratic bosses, the ju-
nior mortuary attendants were not morbidly con-
cerned with precedent. They were full of good will
offered to produce another stiff for the happy
customer. The joint family was aghast. They didn't
want someone else's nephew. But the Master saved
the day. He stepped into the inner recesses of the
morgue, located the correct body, and proceeded
to raise it from the dead.

The American is fuzzy on the details of the mir-
acle. "There was so much noise, people were going
all around me. But I think the life force came
up from the toes. You know, knee bone to the
hip bone, and then connected with the hip bone.
When it finally reached the brain the guy sat up
like Frankenstein's monster. We were paralyzed
with terror."

The error gave way to awe, awe changed to joy,
and everyone fell at the feet of the miracle-worker,
acknowledging him as God. The Master left laugh-

ing. "Was that the greatest miracle you saw in India?
The guru raising a man from the dead?"

"No, man, the real gurus in India do that sort of
thing every day of the week. I didn't think raising
a man from the dead was such a big deal after I'd
seen it around India a couple of years."

"What was a big deal? Did you think anything
was a miracle?" The American thought a long
moment before he answered that question.

"Yeah, I saw a miracle. You should have seen
the morgue, guys rushing all over the place, clerks,
mortuary attendants, administrators. Nobody knew
what was going on. I reckon the real miracle was
that the Master found that body. The rest was
easy."

Those who have dealt with the bureaucracy or
their baggage in an airline terminal will agree.
The mystery lies in the heart of the Machine. Lo-

cate its pulse and all miracles come within reach.

In the halcyon days when the Machine was
bright and shiny no one was looking for the pulse,
everyone was enjoying the performance. Music was
being linked to pictures, the holograph had replaced
the ghost.

Later it was the malfunction that carried the
magic. The melted frame in the film projector was
an occasion for general rejoicing.

Since the West was famed for its technological
efficiency, we were somewhat nonplussed by these
new low-quality pleasures. Our machines were the
product of ingenious saving, scavenging, and smug-
gling. We were wary of the wallop packed by the
contact high, which might make us want to be ma-
chine wreckers, too. The media shamans had us in
a bind. We didn't want to believe them when they
told us, "The Quality bag is déclassé. You gotta re-
lease yourself from all this gadgetry." We didn't
want to engage in their discussions—if it worked,
did it work well enough to blow the fuses? If it
didn't work, was it better? It seemed those riddles
were better addressed to the Western wealthies who
could always buy more toys. For us these were not
toys, they were miracles. Fortunately, machine de-
struction was only a recurrent passing phase. In-
stead the pathfinders decided to marry the two kinds
of miracles, Eastern and Occidental, for the ad-
vancement of man.



BLUE-EYED BABE stares at Naresh across
the candles at an intimate supper-for-two in Delhi.
She came to India for enlightenment and *sadhana*,
but she's getting an old-fashioned run-of-the-mill se-
duction. Naresh still likes black-and-white movies,
wine, roses, and lace-negligée sex. Blue Eyes is
from California and is the only person on the plan-
et to offer a degree course in Inner Environments.
She meets a lot of academics from Stanford Uni-
versity who tell her about their experiments.

BLUE EYES: It's just terrible. They got these two
men—who are gay actually. I think
gays are supposed to be better sub-
jects or something—and they trained
them to leave their bodies. It worked.
They left their bodies in California
and went to Boston with their minds.
NARESH: What's the big idea? Why are the
Americans training homosexuals to
fly?

BLUE EYES: This is going to spook you. So they
gays can penetrate into Russia. See,
they've got this top-secret hush-hush

operation, it's like a CIA cell in Boston. The gays were programmed to bring back the code names of the spies. But they brought back their real-life nicknames, too. Doesn't that wipe you out? And you know what?

NARESH: What?

BLUE EYES: They brought back the plans for the wiring and the plumbing too, for God's sake.

Silence over the sauterne. Naresh looks at Blue Eyes speculatively and wonders if he will be in physical danger if he persists in the seduction. Blue Eyes, unaware of the stir she's creating, goes headlong on.

BLUE EYES: It's not so wild really. They got the ideas from India. Look at the Maharishi. He's offering these courses in levitation in Switzerland. You've heard all about them, haven't you? My friends are going in jumbo-jet loads to his ashram.

I may go myself. I know how meaningful these retreats can be, when you get back in touch with yourself and the mysterious forces of the universe. It's like all to do with rediscovering your inner environments and your outer aura and Supreme Shanti.

Naresh isn't tracking her anymore. She's in orbit. He's heading for a black hole.

BLUE EYES: You know what we do when we have parties in California nowadays?

Naresh shakes his head weakly.

BLUE EYES: At the end of the party when people are getting a little bored we send out for the Transcendental Meditation heads. The ones who've done the advanced course in the Maharishi's Swiss ashram. And we watch them lift off. Costs fifteen hundred dollars if they make the levitation. Or you get your money back.

The New York underground

IN AN ERA WHERE today's miracle becomes tomorrow's toy, it is inevitable that the world should draw closer to the Indian view that the miracle lies in the eye of the beholder.

Beneath the pavements of busy Manhattan is a basement consecrated to the religions of 110 countries. It is indisputably the high temple of religious egalitarianism, an Acropolis for the Aquarian Age. I was invited to a sort of séance in this cellar.

We were met at the doors of the temple by several elderly Eastern European ladies dressed in saris and waving joss sticks. The guru was sitting inside the temple in front of a fine marble on which were entwined the Star of David, the crescent of Islam, and a crucifix. This tableau of mutually exclusive had no doubt escaped the attention of the warring delegates at the United Nations building up the road, who might have wanted to make something of it. But we of the spiritual underworld were moved by the religious Esperanto of this mummery of the devout.

The guru, a nice clean Brahmin, who was reputed to have miraculous healing powers, stood in front of the marble slab in freshly laundered robes, meditating. It was the unusual form of his meditation that had attracted many of his devotees. At the time the trend-setters of the New York hypochondriac set had located the eyeball as the focal point of all distress, physical and spiritual. If the guru had reached it was significant, and many people framed Tibetan eye-charts hanging on the walls of their apartments. The fact that no one could see the guru was incidental.

As our eyes got accustomed to the gloom we were able to see the guru more clearly. But he wasn't looking at us. He had his hands folded over his belly and was rolling his eyeballs. We bowed our heads. After half an hour of boredom I got restless and sneaked a glance to see if the faithful were getting on. To my surprise the faithful were emulating the guru, following his lead with their own. Apparently, twice a week these sophisticated urbanites would shed their brushed denims for badly tied saris and come roll their eyeballs at one another for an hour of deadly earnest. True believers, convinced that they rolled their eyes long enough, they would follow the guru, acquire healing powers.

The meditation of the devotees came to an abrupt halt when the elderly ladies rose to their feet and initiated the procession. This entailed sliding through the pews, walking in single file to the Teacher, touching his feet, and receiving his blessing, while the Teacher delivered with his hands while his eyes continued to careen in an otherwise motionless orbit. Having been blessed, we filed past the ladies who were dispensing the guru's *darshan* from a box of Swiss chocolates. We each got a chocolate, and then back to our seats.

It was now administration time. Notices produced and functionaries read them out. Much money had been collected last week. The arrangements in Florida for the guru's two-day Thanksgiving Season Retreat. Who was to stand behind for a private audience with the guru. A r

one of the devotees for vegetarian cutlets. The details that preoccupy any religious community.

Then came the moment for the guru to give us benediction and some thoughts to sustain us in the coming week. There was a demure rustle of expectation in the audience. This was the only time the guru spoke and it was essential not to miss a word, for the road was a rocky one out there in Manhattan.

The Teacher's written speech, which would the next day be mimeographed and available for purchase, was held up for him by the seniormost East-European elderly. The guru's eyeballs began to descend. The pupils constricted. The Teacher's face went to zero in on the paper. It would have been a spiritual miracle if he had been able to read after closing his eyes for an hour. But he didn't pull it off. The powers of the guru were sometimes limited to controlling the bodies of others, but not his



Contact highs

A LARGE NUMBER OF GURUS do have control over their bodies. Some get irritated if their control sessions too much curiosity. They are considered truly holy, men who refuse to make caricatures of the quest. There is such a man in Rishikesh, who lives outside a temple on a bed made of nails and of jagged steel. He is naked, his body is covered with the ascetic's ash, his hair is matted with it. On a broken slate propped up on a brick next to his head are written in English and in Hindi the words: *Yes, I am a sadhu. Yes, I have not spoken for twelve years. Yes, my body still feels some pain and discomfort. Please leave me alone to meditate on the Universal Absolute.*

The control of the true *sadhu* should extend not only over the body's capacity to endure pain but

also over its capacity for pleasure. The object of gaining control is not suppression but transcendence. Indian family magazines have on occasion featured photographs of some holy man in a stance of otherworldliness, looking into the middle distance while a huge stone dangles from his erect priapus. To the ordinary Hindu such a photograph is an illustration of a *sadhu* showing he has risen above one kind of impotence. The Hindu believes that impotence comes in a hundred different forms, and of these the impotence brought on by sexual desire is only a malady in a minor key.

Few Indians believe anymore that the motives of the foreign tourists who come to see the great erotic temples are cultural and not prurient. Their suspicions have been confirmed by the foreign communities that spring up around these temples during the tourist season, housed under tattered saris suspended on bamboo poles, communities whose members are prepared to reenact some of the temple motifs for paying customers. The locals now shrug them off as just another scam that keeps the tourist currency in circulation.

The moment when *pudeur* lost to pornography can perhaps be dated to the time when the hippies first discovered the bone-white beaches of Goa.

In those days the hippies were freaking out to Nature in her most primitive and romantic guise. Goa not only had beaches and Rousseau-esque jungles; it had a monkey as one of its major deities, the god Hanuman. The hippies didn't know that Hanuman is worshiped as the Custodian of Honor. What they saw was whole temples given over to monkeys swinging up and down from the vines of banyan trees, chattering in the temple forecourts, snatching food out of the hands of worshipping devotees. The Goans didn't know the hippies hadn't come for a carnival. What they saw were musicians with flutes and guitars, singing in the moonlight. Everyone showed up at Calingute Beach for the Happening. Eventually it happened.

Calingute Beach was also used as a shortcut by little Indian Christian schoolgirls led by novitiates hiding behind cowls and veils to the convent on the other side of the beach for their daily catechism lessons. Imagine the shock of the tiny demoiselles, under the basilisk gaze of their stern duennas, when they came upon the following scene of merriment: hundreds of naked bodies, of every hue and national origin, coupling in the sand. In the middle of the alfresco sensuality cowered monkeys, pinching a thigh here, the nape of a neck there. The nuns hur-

ried their wards past the landscape of sin. They had taught generations of young Christian ladies that men have animal passions, but they had never had the misfortune of proving it.

The nuns described the scene to the Bishop. The Bishop consulted the townspeople, and was informed by the Hindu fishermen that the hippies were adopting baby monkeys from the temple precincts and suckling them. There was also a strong rumor that a few avant-garde hippies were mating with the monkeys, though no one in town had actually witnessed this. It was decided that steps must be taken to bring this perversion to a halt.

Parents, priests, and publicans joined in the battle. Giggling schoolgirls stenciled onto banners such slogans as BAN BREAST FEEDING OF MONKEYS ON THE BEACH and LOT'S WIFE GO HOME. Bearing these severe admonishments, the town made a procession to the members of the Municipal Corporation, who were discovered to be too embarrassed to go down to the beach and personally stop the orgies.

Political torpor was no match for such wayward behavior, so the authorities took the line of least resistance. The hippies weren't actually harming anyone. Perhaps it would be best if the schoolgirls used a longer route to the convent, bypassing the spectacle of the beach. Thus the Corporation avoided creating a national scandal, and succeeded in creating a national sport. Goa now has two unique attractions. The beach for the tourist who wants cheap thrills. And the cathedral, for the tourist of a religious bent.

Venus rampant

ALLEN GINSBERG, a self-proclaimed Dharma Bum, had seen the best minds of his generation screaming for release from the American Dream. Presumably this spiritual bedlam led him to take a sabbatical in the city of Calcutta. To most Indians this would seem an eccentric if not wholly mad decision. Calcutta is not famed for its serenity.

But the poet had his reasons. Calcutta, he announced, is the most liberated city in the world. The people have no hang-ups. They go around naked. It was a characteristically original view. No one before had suggested to the natives that their destitution was a sign of advance. But the Bengali residents of Calcutta love novelty and are predisposed to regard poets of all persuasions with favor.

Those were the days when everything was in flux. There were rumors about Tab Hunter. Elvis Presley had just made a movie that was set in a whorehouse. Now a famous, published, avant-garde American poet had looked upon India and pronounced

it free. Naturally Calcutta thought his reference to the carnal. Before you could say snap, the prophet was encircled by *vers libres* satyrs.

People started arriving from miles around in delicious anticipation of an orgy. You needed a ticket to ride but in those early days it wasn't the ticket of a month's salary. The indigent could get it with the flourish of a poem, preferably salacious. The movement called itself the Hungry Generation perhaps in deference to the prevailing famine conditions that year. Devotees published many broadsheets describing their combined lusts. The poet was kept abreast of each perversion, informed of every orgasm, and the faithful leered at the feverish Master demanding, "What is the Answer?"

Alas, Ginsberg was a Western not an Eastern Master, and as such was preoccupied with his salvation. He was clocking up time in a personal heaven and probably hadn't noticed the fast coming around his ankles. He betrayed them, having forgotten that even nudity was no defense against a Calcutta summer. He left. The government struck. By popular demand the Hungry Generation went to jail for violating the obscenity laws. Some of the most unforgiving disciples are still waiting for the Master's return.

GINSBERG AND THE Hungry Generation were ahead of their time. The orgies would come but they would come fifteen years later. The guru would stay, but they would be Indians, not Americans. Except for a line of borrowed dialogue. Some popular Indian gurus have taken to answering an increasingly desperate question "What is the Answer?" with a giggle and a soothing "What is the Question?" From the lips of an Indian guru a reply is merely a polite way of finding out what hurts, and when the ache is established the guru will produce an equally polite, if banal, remedy. The guru does not understand the query, but his national clientele refuse to believe this, so they insist on his politesse for profundity. Thus, the number of disciples grows and the number of skeptics decreases.

In that sense we are more fortunate than the Indians who come to see us. The visitors to India have already suffered from *fatigue d'abondance*, which is why they consent to stay with us. From their perspective have at least heard that all is not well in the land of plenty, a rumor further reinforced by the continual laments being purveyed around the world by the record companies.

Those who visit India, on the other hand, have not been told often enough or in a popularly

ensible way that the experience of the East is not accessible to the Western mind, except by an almost total reeducation. Yet the common way that sitting for extended periods of time in lotus position gets you halfway past the wheel of existence is not only not being denied, but is actively propagated by many ashrams currently. The gurus have ignored a primary difference between themselves and their disciples. The Eastern Master, when asked "What is the answer?" has traditionally replied "Who is Asking?" In that lies a central difference between Eastern and Western thought. The East is not concerned with intellectual aggrandizement, so much so that the West is called the Eastern mind childish, a child that didn't even ask questions but simply perceived them. In a tradition where the question asks for an answer and the answer replies itself and all that remains is to establish the identity of the asker, clearly the Occidental is going to experience serious difficulty in eliciting any information at all, be it spiritual, physical, or just the fastest way to get to the next town.



Sentimental journeys

THE SIMPLE ANSWER to the whole movement is that we come here to get unwired," a teacher said. "And here, you're ignored, you're not important at all, so you are forced back on your own resources, not the resources of some huge machinery. If you can get used to the indifference, you learn to function again."

India as the new magnet for the new despair? When you're tired of winning, come lose with us. For those who can't take too much indifference, it is enlightening to find that India provides so much familiarity to the weary traveler. The Latins are drawn to the saffron-clad *sadhu* in the burgundy robes of the Cardinal. The British, still conscious of the

lines of Imperial Vision, retreating from the monuments of conquest to the hair shirts of the slums. The Canadians and the Australians, trapped in their fears of provincialism, following the caravan with an eye on the price tag. The Germans, unable to shed the logic of their scholarship, exorcising Aryan romanticism in the isolated mountain retreats of the Himalayas. And the Grand Optimists, the Americans, trying for the big one—the vault from solitary into nothing. Well, they have the money and we have the time, and few feel shortchanged: the few should look to their point of view.

THE MAHARISHI stopped off in Delhi last winter to hold audience for four days and four nights in a large suite in the city's most expensive hotel. He received in his bedroom, clad simply in a *lungi* of the finest silk, his bare shoulders covered with a white silk shawl. The several hundred applicants were shown into the drawing room, the dining room, and the secretary's chambers—all parts of the suite—to wait until their names were called for a private audience. To help them while away the time profitably, the supplicants were given large armfuls of expensively printed literature describing the guru's latest enthusiasm, a Blueprint for World Government, as well as literature describing the success of his old enthusiasms, such as defense strategy and military might, projections on how far the world's self-destructive tendencies had been contained by the good vibrations emanating from him and his followers, and, of course, the great and necessary power of Transcendental Meditation.

The devotees had pinned posters on the walls of the waiting rooms. On first sight these colorful, well-designed pictures seemed to be tourist advertisements. But that was only because of the gloss and the scenery. On closer inspection they turned out to be spectacular examples of the success of the Maharishi's teachings. The illustrations, which covered every inch of available wall space, showed the Maharishi's students at his ashram in Switzerland in various degrees of levitation. The expressions of those who had left the ground conveyed heady excitement, complete disbelief, pure bliss, and in only one case, as the subject peered nervously over his crossed legs, vertigo.

I shared my audience time with the Maharishi with four other people: two Italian countesses, an Indian nuclear physicist, and an English scientist doing biochemical research. The Italian women engaged the Maharishi's attention first. One of them had been in India several months, the other and

older woman only ten days. The younger woman did the talking for both of them. She explained that she had been initiated into Transcendental Meditation at one of the centers outside Rome, and her friend had come to India to be initiated into meditation by the Maharishi himself.

"But Swami," the countess ended, "my mantra is not working anymore."

"Oh dear," the Maharishi said, and continued to smile, "then we must give you another. Use the new mantra for four days, then let him know"—and he pointed to a man kneeling piously in the dark corner—"whether it is working. I won't be here. I must fly back to Switzerland tomorrow. My work requires me there."

The countess seemed completely consoled. I wondered at the credulity of her friend, who had just witnessed that the efficacy of the mantra was not total, nor did meditation upon it produce transcendence, and yet was determined to have one.

The second countess was at least sixty years old, lived a stone's throw from the Vatican, and was a practicing Catholic. She was also not a fool. But she believed so totally in the power of this incomprehensible word from another religion and in an unknown language that she had paid the air fare from Rome to Delhi for the express purpose of wresting it from the Maharishi's obliging lips. Later, just before she went into insulin shock owing to the unforeseen delays in the Maharishi's dining room, which had adversely affected her blood-sugar count, she explained, "This mantra, it is only for me. It is the connection between myself and the peace. My son is dead. My daughters are married. I am old and lonely. I have need of the peace."

Back at the Vatican they were offering the "peace that passeth understanding," but it wasn't enough for the countess. What she wanted was *Shanti* with a name tag. A specific, not a general, reprieve. And if it meant spending the next few years following the Maharishi around the globe, exchanging new mantras for old ones, then that was the price of an individual fitting. *Haute couture* always costs more than *prêt-à-porter*.

The Maharishi, having dispensed with the demands of the Italian women, turned eagerly to the Indian nuclear physicist and the English biochemist. They were to be participants in his newest inspiration, a World Conference on Chemistry, Physics, and Transcendental Meditation. The year before he had been interested in armies and armaments, and somehow convinced the Pentagon to espouse the cause of Transcendental Meditation. The Pentagon had recognized in the Maharishi's teachings a key that could transform men from cannon fodder into samurai. Fresh from such triumph, the Maharishi

had now turned his celestial energy to the project of harnessing the potential of science.

The two scientists watched his preparatory gles with clinical detachment, trying to hide dismay from each other and from the guru's eye. Rationalism lost out to curiosity and they decided to stay.

"You see, my friends," the guru said, "science only beginning to catch up with the knowledge we Indian mystics have had through the ages. You have scientific words for what we know. Teach then you will accept the truth of what we know. Until then you will consider us fools. What amounts to is that you wish to make up your mantras." The Maharishi giggled wickedly at the scientists.

"For instance, anyone who is seriously interested and will not disturb, is welcome to come to Switzerland and see for himself whether my students can levitate. But so many who come, go and say they were hypnotized." The Maharishi keeled over in a fit of high-pitched laughter.

"They say they were hypnotized because they consider themselves intelligent and *know* there is no such thing as levitation. So they say it is not magic. But intelligent people are not supposed to be in magic either, are they, my scientific friends? The scientists were looking at the guru with great interest.

"After all," the Maharishi continued, "what is there in levitation? In meditation we teach people to go below the layer of the conscious mind to the center. The center is where the energy is totally concentrated. So what is there magical in all this? We teach our students that by concentration in meditation they can create an impenetrable field of energy between the ground and their bodies. The greater the field of energy the higher the meditating man can rise. It is simple Q.E.D."

By now the Maharishi had succeeded in capturing the full attention of the scientists. He was speaking in their language.

"Am I not telling the truth?" the Master asked, warning to his task. "For thousands of years we have been searching for the essence, the particle. The particle, no, gentlemen? How you all think when you found the atom that you had the answer. Then what do you find? Electrons, neutrons, protons, now what? The particle. We are not such fools as you think. If you had asked us we would have told you—and I am warning you now—you do not have the answer. You are getting there. It will take you another forty or fifty years."

"Then perhaps you will understand that your particle is not what you think. Because, gentlemen, your particle is only *shakti*. It is

gy. Where is *buddhi*? Where is the intelligence of life?"

The Maharishi reached out and gave a marigold to the garlands lying at his feet to the biologist. The Englishman blushed and attempted awkward *namaste*, bowing with hands folded. In the Maharishi emphatically pulled a red rose out of the garlands and handed it to the nuclear physicist. The Indian accepted the flower nervously. It was clear from the expression on his face he suspected that the gift might drain some of the power he had acquired from a lifetime of being the rational. The Maharishi's enthusiasm for his new project covered the self-consciousness of both scientists.

Come, gentlemen. Let us join hands. It is the Age of Darkness. We have no time to wait thirty, forty years for scientists to find the words. The moral issues are already clear. Look around you. See what it is possible to achieve. Look how the world is thirsty. People everywhere are crying, 'Show us the way!' Is it funny that they are asking this in Kalyug, the immoral of eras?" The Maharishi giggled in delight. "But we can do it together, that is what is so funny. And only in these times when your knowledge is so close to our wisdom. In six months I am inviting all the top scientists of the world to a conference to discuss. I hope you will join us. My secretary will give you the details."

IN NEW YORK on a stifling June afternoon I was with some friends in a large American car trying to get to Central Park. At Sixty-first Street and Avenue someone is pulling away from the curb. Someone else is trying to back into the same space, effectively preventing the first vehicle from moving. We are ideally placed to steal the parking space should either car succeed in moving at the curb. A passenger in our car wakes from his torpor and shouts, "That guy is moving out. Sneak in fast!" We are being driven by a benign American who is a Sufi. He takes no notice of the advice being offered from the back seat. Someone thinks he is being noticed and pounds him on the shoulder. "Look! That guy's leaving. Grab his spot!" Our Sufi friend looks into the driving mirror at the back-seat adviser. In a soft and patient voice he explains, "Fuck, man, I can't do that. Karmic-speaking, it's bad design."

You keep hearing the wrong song in the wrong key.

Snakes and ladders

JUNG HAD THE GOOD SENSE to be cautious about India. He said he had met many Occidentals in his travels through the subcontinent who thought they were living in India. Jung maintained that they were in fact living in bottles of Western air, protected from India by objectivity, causality, and all the other intellectual apparatus of the West. He went on to say, "It is quite possible that India is the real world and that the white man lives in a madhouse of abstractions." Emphasizing that without those abstractions the white man would disintegrate in India.

Jung got it right except for one omission. The Indians are no better at handling reality than anyone else, but we live closer to it so we have to take more elaborate evasive action.

Take reincarnation, the philosophical paradox that it is possible to free oneself from action through endured action. We found it too hot to handle. So action was defined as the sum of individual acts, the acts themselves were given points, and if you didn't have enough points you were born again, lower on the ladder. Which meant that a ladder had to be invented. Which it was, proving to be so popular a theme that it is played to this very day in the form of the game Snakes and Ladders.

The lowest rung of the ladder was the untouchable, followed closely by the woman. The highest rung was the scholar, who studied the Scriptures and contemplated the moral law. Since the Scriptures were the province of the highest caste, it was necessary to guard them against profanity. India's greatest lawgiver, Manu, recommended that if the untouchable chance to hear even the sound of Sanskrit, the language of the Scriptures, it was probably best all around if he had boiling oil poured into his offending ears. As for women, they were inferior and dangerous beings whose only legitimacy was conferred by marriage. If they should inadvertently outlive their husbands, then it was their clear moral duty to immolate themselves on their husbands' funeral pyres.

If you consider that by the terms of this order all the foreigners—quite a few of them women—living in Indian ashrams are untouchables, it is just as well that parliamentary India has legislated against the system. But the legislation should never have been necessary. Hindu thought is without dogma. When we accept the comforting concepts of *untouchable*, *heathen*, *infidel*, it is in order to avoid having to address ourselves to the enormity of dharma.

Dharma means no distinction between chaos and order, accepting good and evil as indivisible, witnessing simultaneous continuity as the moral order, and being as a process of endless becoming. And yet to act. It means you cannot follow the Law. You are the Law.

Obviously, discotheques are a lot more fun than dharma.

If the white man lives in a madhouse of abstractions, then Indians live in a madhouse of distractions. But we give them philosophical names.

Such as Bhakti Yoga, the meditation of adoration.

Hatha Yoga, the meditation of physical endurance.

Tantra Yoga, the meditation of the senses.

Guru Yoga, enlightenment through the Teacher.

Reincarnation, enlightenment through rebirth.

Over and over again, when reality is acknowledged to be too harsh, our meditations and our spiritual techniques have degenerated into payola systems, and those systems are used to buy time against Time.

And we have a philosophical name for payola systems, too. We call them Leela, the meditation of the practical joke.

Like the practical jokes being perpetrated daily in the ashrams of India.

Spinning the wheel

THE DISENCHANTED DISCIPLES of the ashrams say, How come our guru's got a solid-gold toilet seat? If he's an ascetic and above earthly desire and stuff, what is he doing with a gold toilet seat?

The guru replies, Solid-gold toilet seats are Maya. They are mere illusion.

The disciples say, Come on, Guru. Gold toilet seats are bribery. We hope you feel guilty about all this religious bull you're laying on us.

Guilty? the guru says. What is that? Another one of your laws?

The resident congregation says, You know what guilt is, Swami. Don't be naive. It's the price of doing something you know you shouldn't do.

The guru asks, Then do all of you know what you are doing?

The congregation falters.

The whims of the West were so easily translated

into revelation by India. But revelation comes expensive in the East. Kipling did point out "India is the grim stepmother of the world," the mythology of India illustrates over and over again that it is one thing to feel playful, and another thing to sit down at the table.

In Indian temples the idol in front of which you place your incense and your marigolds has a reverse image, the image of the profane. This is not to be looked upon unless you are prepared to forgo the securities of the clichés of the sacred. Those who dare and who do not self-destruct are sometimes referred to as "realized souls." What they have realized is that you get no point in a good faith in a game of dirty poker.

Even the great Pandavas discovered that though the dice were loaded against them, they couldn't get up. The game was only a game, the ante was for real. After they had thrown everything into the pot, their money, their cows, their wives, and their royal line, they had to play the dice one more time. On that throw they lost their liberty, and faced the choice of slavery or exile.

We still confront that choice in India because of something in the air. It is coming in from the West and telling us that while there are no free lunches, Utopia is possible. Poverty, disease, death are not reality. They are inefficiency. If we work hard enough and fast enough we will conquer the first two, and any minute now there will be a breakthrough in genetic engineering that will allow everyone to view death as superstition.

For us to reprogram ourselves, for us to grasp that life is not about doing time but about making time, means that we have to dump most of our philosophical perceptions overboard and accept the imperatives of history, hoping we will become exiles in our own land. And there is no lifeboats, fighting to grab those perceptions of the very people who told us to get rid of them. Last and be free.

This is known as mythological osmosis, and an Indian writer has pointed out, it is possible that in the not-too-distant future if the Indian learns to learn about India he will have to consume the West, and if the West wants to remember how to live, they will have to come to us.

This is also known as rock 'n' roll.

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WEEKEND

Short story

by Fay Weldon

BY SEVEN-THIRTY they were ready to go. Martha had everything packed into the car and the three children appropriately dressed and in the back seat, complete with educational games and wholemeal biscuits. When everything was ready in the car, Martin would switch off the television, come downstairs, lock up the house, and back, and take the wheel. Weekend! Only two hours' drive down to the cottage on Friday evenings: three hours' back on Sunday nights. The pleasures of every and guests in between. They reckon themselves fortunate. how fortunate!

On Fridays Martha would get home on the train at six-twelve and prepare tea and sandwiches for the family. Then she would strip the beds and put the sheets and quilt covers in the washing machine for Monday, take out the country bedding, and the books and the newspapers, and the weekend food—acquired at the shops throughout the week, to lessen the strain—and her own folder of work from the office, and Martin's drawing materials (she was a market researcher in an advertising agency, he a freelance designer), and hairbrushes, jeans, T-shirts, Jolyon's antibiotics (suffered from sore throats), Jenny's record, Jasper's cassette player, and so on—and so on!—and would pack them all, efficiently and quickly, into the trunk. Very little could be left in the cottage during the weekend. ("An open invitation to burglars"; Martha would run round the house cleaning and wiping, doing this and that, finding the cat at one neighbor's and delivering it to the other, while Martin and the children had their tea. Martin would catch the BBC 2 news, and the children cleared away the tea table, and the children tossed up for the best positions in the car.

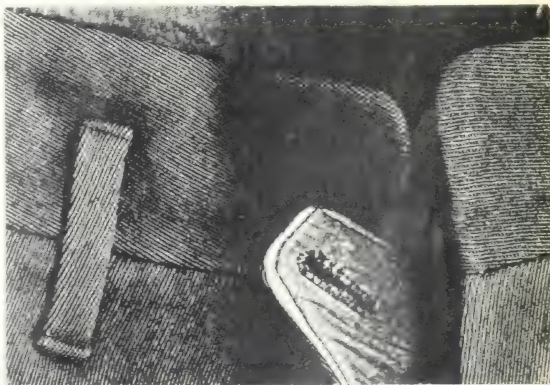
"Martha," Martin said tonight, "you ought to be Mrs. Hodder to do more. She takes advantage of you." Mrs. Hodder came in twice a week to clean. She was over seventy. Martha paid her out of her own wages: well, the running of the house was Martha's concern. Martha chose to go out to work—as was

her perfect right, Martin allowed, even though it wasn't the best thing for the children, but that must be Martha's moral responsibility—Martha must surely pay her domestic stand-in. An evident truth, heard loud and clear and frequent in Martin's mouth and Martha's heart.

"I expect you're right," Martha said. She did not want to argue. Martin had had a long hard week, and now had to drive. Martha couldn't. Martha's license had been suspended four months back for drunken driving. Everyone agreed that the suspension was unfair: Martha seldom drank to excess: she was, for one thing, usually too busy pouring other people's drinks or washing other people's glasses to get much inside herself. But Martin had taken her out to dinner on her birthday, as was his custom, and exhaustion and excitement mixed had made her imprudent.

So now Martin had to drive her car down to the cottage, and he was always tired on Fridays, and hot and sleepy on Sundays, and every rattle and clank and bump in the engine she felt to be somehow her fault. Martha's car was an old estate car, with room for children, picnic baskets, bedding, food, games, plants, drink, portable television, and all the things required by the middle classes for weekends in

Fay Weldon is a British writer whose most recent novel is Praxis, published last fall by Summit Books.



the country. It lumbered rather than zipped and made Martin angry. He seldom spoke a harsh word, but Martha could detect his mood from what he did not say rather than what he did, and from the tilt of his head, and the way his crinkly, merry eyes seemed crinklier and merrier still—of course from the way he addressed Martha's car.

"Come along, you old banger you! Can't you do better than that? You're too old, that's your trouble. Stop complaining. Always complaining, it's only a hill. You're too wide about the hips. You'll never get through there."

Martha worried about her age, her tendency to complain, and the width of her hips. She took the remarks personally. Was she right to do so? The children noticed nothing: it was just funny, lively Daddy being witty about Mummy's car.

Martin would only laugh if she said anything about the way he spoke to her car, and warn her against paranoia: "Don't get like your mother, darling." Martha's mother had, toward the end, thought that people were plotting against her. Martha's mother had led a secluded, suspicious life, and made Martha's childhood a chilly, lonely time. Life now, by comparison, was wonderful for Martha. People, children, houses, conversations, food, drink, theaters—even, now, a career. Martin standing between her and the hostility of the world—popular, easy, funny Martin, beckoning the rest of the world into earshot.

Ah, she was grateful: little earnest Martha, with her shy ways and her penchant for passing boring exams—how her life had blossomed out! Three children, too—Jasper, Jenny, and Jolyon—all with Martin's broad brow and open looks, and the confidence borne of her love and care.

Martin drives. Martha, for once, drowns.

THE RIGHT FOOD, the right words, the right play. Doctors for the tonsils: dentists for the molars. Confiscate guns: censor television: encourage creativity. Paints and paper to hand: books on the shelves: meetings with teachers. Music teachers. Dancing lessons. Parties. Friends to tea. School plays. Open days. Junior orchestra.

Martha is jolted awake. Traffic lights. Martin doesn't like Martha to sleep while he drives.

Clothes. Oh, clothes! Can't wear this: must wear that. Dress shops. Piles of clothes in corners: duly washed, but waiting to be ironed, waiting to be put away.

Get the piles off the floor into the laundry baskets. Martin doesn't like a mess.

Creativity arises out of order, not out of order. Five years off work while the children grow small: back to work with seniority lost. What did you think something was for nothing you have children, mother, that is your reward. It lies not in the world.

Have you taken enough food? Always to judge.

Food. Oh, food! Shop during the lunch hour. Lug it all home. Cook for the freezer. Wednesday evenings while Martin is at a car-maintenance class and isn't there to bother you being unrestful. Martin likes you down in the evenings. Fruit, meat, vegetables, flour for homemade bread. Well, shop bristling full of pollutants. Frozen food, even your own, loses flavor. Martin often remarks on it, but he doesn't mind. Everyone loves mango chutney, and the expense!

London Airport to the left. Look, child, Concorde? No, idiot, of course it isn't a Concorde.

Ah, to be all things to all people: child, husband, employer, friends! It can be done, yes it can: superwoman.

Drink. Homemade wine. Why not? Berries grown thick and rich in London, at least you know what's in it. Store it in the cupboard: lots of room: up and down the stepladder. Careful! Don't slip. Don't do anything.

No such thing as an accident. Accidents are Freudian slips: they are willful, bad-tempered things.

Martin can't bear bad temper. Martin likes slim ladies. Diet. Martin rather likes his own. Diet. Martin admires slim legs and bosoms. How to achieve them both? Impossible. But try, oh, try, to be what you ought to be, not what you are. Inside and out.

Martin brings back flowers and chocolate. Whisks Martha off for holiday weekends. Wonderful! The best husband in the world, into his crinkly, merry, gentle eyes; into his mouth slopes away into the shape of a pout. Never mind. Gaze into his eyes. Love. It must be love. You married him. Salisbury Plain. Stonehenge. Look, child, look! Mother, we've seen Stonehenge a dozen times. Go back to sleep.

Cook! Ah, cook. People love to cook. Martin and Martha's dinners. Work it out. Your head in the lunch hour. If you get six-twelve, you can wrap the meat while you beat the egg whites while you feed the children while you lay the table while you string the beans while you set out the cheeses... cheese, Martin loves goat's cheese, Martin tries to like goat's cheese—oh, bed, peace, quiet.

Ah, sex. Orgasm, please. Martin re-
it. Well, so do you. And you don't want
cretary providing a passion you need
to develop. Quick, quick, the cosmic
Love. Married love.

cretary! Probably a vulgar suspicion:
g more. Probably a fit of paranoiacs, à
her, now dead and gone.

peace. R.I.P. Chilly, lonely mother, fol-
her suspicions where they led.

Nearly there, children. Nearly in paradise,
at the cottage. Have another biscuit.

en grass. Oh, God, grass. Grass must be
d. Restful lawns, daisies bobbing, but-
s glowing. Real roses round the door,
and grass and books. Books.

ase, Martin, do we have to have 200
even though Victorian first editions?
need dusting.

rs of laughter from Martin, Jasper,
and Jolyon. Mummy says we shouldn't
he books: books need dusting!

es, green grass, books, and peace.

tha woke up with a start when they got
cottage, and gave a little shriek that
them all laugh. Mummy's waking shriek,
alled it.

n there was the car to unpack and the
to make up, and the electricity to con-
and the supper to make, and the cob-
to remove, while Martin made the fire.

supper—pork chops in sweet-and-sour
("Pork is such a dull meat if you don't
t properly": Martin), green salad from

arden, or such green salad as the rabbits
left ("Martha, did you really net them
ly? Be honest, now!": Martin), and
d potatoes. Mash is so ordinary, and in-
mash unthinkable. The children studied
ght sky with the aid of their star map.
erful, rewarding children!

night. Goodnight. Weekend guests ar-
in the morning. Seven for lunch and
e on Saturday. Seven for Sunday break-
nine for Sunday lunch. ("Don't fuss,

g. You always make such a fuss": Mar-
Oh, God, no garlic squeezer. That means
minutes with salt and the back of a spoon.

who wants lumps of garlic? No one.

Martin's guests. Martin said so. Sleep.

COLIN AND KATIE. Colin is Martin's old-
est friend. Katie is his new young
mistress. Janet, Colin's ex-wife, was
Martha's friend. Janet was rather like
a, quieter and duller than her hus-
A nag and a drag, Martin rather
ht, and said, and of course she'd let her-
o, everyone agreed. No one exactly ex-

cused Colin for walking out, but you could "Nearly there,
see the temptation. children.

Katie versus Janet.

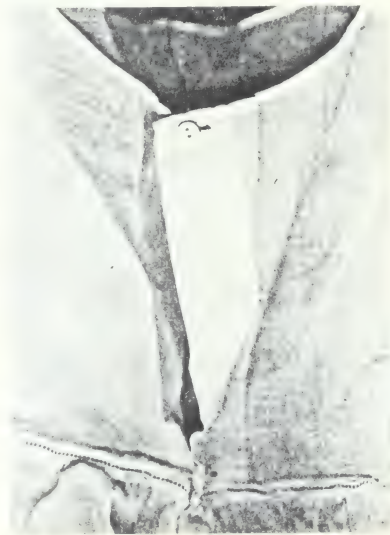
Katie was languid, beautiful, and elegant.
She drawled when she spoke. Her hands were
expressive: her feet were little and feminine.
She had no children.

Janet plodded round on very flat, rather
large feet. There was something wrong with
them. They turned out slightly when she
walked. She had two children. She was, frank-
ly, boring. But Martha liked her: when Janet
came down to the cottage she would wash up.
Not in the way that most guests washed up—
dutifully, setting everything to drain on the
sideboard—but actually drying and putting
away, too. And Janet would wash the bath
and get the children all settled down, with
chairs for everyone, even the littlest, and keep
them quiet and satisfied so the grown-ups—
well, the men—could get on with their con-
versation and their jokes and their love of
country weekends, while Janet stared into
space, as if grateful for the rest, quite happy.

Janet would garden, too. Weed the straw-
berries, while the men went for their walk;
her great feet standing firm and square and
sometimes crushing a plant or so, but never
mind, oh, never mind. Lovely Janet, who
understood.

Now Janet was gone and here was Katie.

Katie talked with the men and went for
walks with the men, and moved her ashtray
rather impatiently when Martha tried to clear



Nearly there,
children.
Nearly in para-
dise, nearly at
the cottage.
Have another
biscuit."

the drinks around it. Dishes were boring, Katie implied by her manner, and domesticity was boring, and anyone who bothered with that kind of thing was a fool. Like Martha. Ash should be allowed to stay where it was, even if it was in the butter, and conversations should never be interrupted.

Knock, knock.

Katie and Colin arrived at one-fifteen on Saturday morning, just after Martha had got to bed: "You don't mind? It was the moonlight. We couldn't resist it. You should have seen Stonehenge! We didn't disturb you? Such early birds!"

Martha rustled up a quick meal of omelets. Saturday nights' eggs. ("Martha makes a lovely omelet": Martin.) ("Honey, make one of your mushroom omelets: cook the mushrooms separately, remember, with lemon. Otherwise the water from the mushrooms gets into the egg and spoils everything.") Sunday-supper mushrooms. But ungracious to say anything.

Martin had revived wonderfully at the sight of Colin and Katie. He brought out the whiskey bottle. Glasses. Ice. Jug for water. Wait. Wash up a sinkful of dishes when they're finished. Two A.M.

"Don't do it tonight, darling."

"It'll only take a sec." Bright smile, not a hint of self-pity. Self-pity can spoil everyone's weekend.

SHE IS RUNNING round in her nightie. Now if that had been Katie—but there's something so *practical* about Martha. Reassuring, mind; but the skimpy nightie and the broad rump and the thirty-eight years are all rather embarrassing. Martha can see it in Colin's and Katie's eyes. Martin's too. Martha wishes she did not see so much in

other people's eyes. Her mother did, too. dead mother. Did I misjudge you?

This was the second weekend Colin had been down with Katie but without Janet, who was a photographer: Katie had been his sorizer. First Colin and Janet: then Janet, and Katie: now Colin and Katie.

On the first of the Colin Janet Katie ends Katie had appeared out of the bath. "I say," she said, holding out a damp towel with evident distaste, "I can only find any hope of a dry one?" And Martha ran to fetch a dry towel and, amazingly, one, and handed it to Katie, who flashed a brilliant smile and said, "I can't bear towels. Anything in the world but towels," as if speaking to a servant in a time of shortage of staff, and took all the towels there was none left for Martha to wash.

The trouble, of course, was drying an towel at all in the cottage. There were no facilities for doing so, and Martin had a horrible idea of clotheslines, which might spoil the view, so he had toiled and miled all week in the city to get a country view on the weekend. It was a little too lush to spoil it by draping it with wet towels. But now Martha had brought more towels than perhaps everyone could be satisfied. She took nine damp towels back in a plastic bag on Sunday evenings and see to them in the morning.

On this Saturday morning, straight after breakfast, Katie went out to the car—she had a new Lamborghini; hard to imagine Katie in anything duller—and came back waving a new Yves Saint Laurent towel. "I brought my own, darlings."

They'd brought nothing else. No fruit, no meat, or vegetables, not even bread, certainly not a box of chocolates. They'd gone to bed with alacrity the night before, and the spare room had rocked and heaved, and who'd want to do washing up when you're so tired? They get confused? First Colin and Janet, then Colin and Katie?

Martha murmured something about her thoughts to Martin, who looked shocked. "Colin's my best friend. I don't expect him to bring anything," and Martha felt mean. Good heavens, you can't protect the kids from sex forever; don't be so prudish," said Martin. Martha felt stupid as well. Mean, complicated and stupid.

Janet had rung Martha during the week. The house had been sold over her head, and she and the children had been moved to a small apartment. Katie was trying to persuade Colin to cut down on her allowance, she said.



does one no good to be materialistic," confided. "I have nothing. No home, no car, no ties, no possessions. Look at me! I'm just me and a suitcase of clothes." But Katie was highly satisfied with the me, and the me was stupendous.

Katie had been married twice. Martha marveled at how someone could arrive in her midst with nothing at all to her name—no husband, nor children, nor property—without a mind. But Martha could see the power of that helplessness. If Colin was all Katie had in the world, how could Colin abandon her and to what? Where would she go? How would she live? Oh, clever Katie.

Colin looked handsome and harrowed and fiercer than Martin, though they were much the same age. "Youth's catching," Martin said that night. "It's since he found Katie." And, like some treasure. Discovered; something exciting and wonderful, in the world of established spouses.

ON SATURDAY MORNING Jasper trod on a piece of wood ("Martha, why isn't he wearing shoes? It's too bad": Martin) and Martha took him to the hospital to have a nasty splinter removed. She left the cottage at ten and arrived back at one, to find they were still sitting in the sun drinking, the bottles gleaming in the long grass. The grass hadn't been cut. Don't forget the bottles. A glass means more mornings at the hospital. Oh, don't fuss. Enjoy yourself. Like other people. Try. But no potatoes peeled, no car cleared, nothing. Cigarette ends still on the old toast, bacon rind, and marmalade. What could have done the potatoes," Martha said. Oh, bad temper! Prime sin. They looked at her in amazement and dislike. Martha.

"No goodness," Katie said. "Are we doing the Sunday lunch bit on Saturday? Potatoes. Since I've eaten potatoes. Wonder-

what the children expect it," Martha said. And they did. Saturday and Sunday lunch were like reassuring beacons in their lives. Saturday lunch: family lunch: fish and chips. Sunday lunch: much better cooked at home than at the restaurant. (Martin.) Sunday. Usually roast beef, peas, apple pie. Oh, of course, Yorkshire pudding. Always a problem with oven temperatures. When the beef's going slowly, the Yorkshire should be going fast. How to solve that? Like big bosom and little hips. Just relax," Martin said. "I'll cook dinner, good time. Splinters always work their way out: no need to have taken him to a hos-

pital. Let life drift over you, my love. Flow with the waves, that's the way." And Martin flashed Martha a distant, spiritual smile. His hand lay on Katie's slim brown arm, with its many gold bands. "You do too much for the children," Martin said. "It isn't good for them. Have a drink."

So Martha perched uneasily on the step and had a glass of cider, and wondered how, if lunch was going to be late, she would get cleared up and the meat out of the marinade for the rather formal dinner that would be expected that evening. The marinated lamb ought to cook for at least four hours in a low oven; and the cottage oven was very small, and you couldn't use that and the grill at the same time and Martin liked his fish grilled, not fried. Less cholesterol.

Domestic details like this were very boring, and any mild complaint was registered by Martin as a scene. And to make a scene was so ungrateful Martha didn't say anything.

The children were hungry so Martha opened a can of beans and sausages and heated that up. ("Martha, do they have to eat that crap? Can't they wait?": Martin.)

Katie was hungry: she said so, to keep the children in face. She was lovely with children—most children. She did not particularly like Colin and Janet's children. He saw them only once a month now, not once a week.

"Let me make lunch," Katie said to Martha. "You do so much, poor thing!" And she pulled out of the fridge all the things Martha had put

"Oh, bad temper! Prime sin. They looked at her in amazement and dislike."





King Carl XVI Gustav of Sweden
on the right in these photos—pre-
siding over the 1978 Nobel Prize in Physics
ceremony. He is shaking hands with
Bell Laboratories scientists Robert
Wilson (top photo) and Arno Penzias

What does the Nobel Prize have to do with your telephone?

Two scientists on the site page are receiving the highest honor a scientist can—the Nobel Prize. They are the sixth and seventh laureates to have won their prize-winning research at Bell Telephone Laboratories. These scientists shared a common goal—the search for new knowledge to further advance the art of telecommunications.

Clinton Davisson shared the Nobel Prize in 1937 for demonstrating the wave nature of matter. In 1956, John Bardeen, Walter Brattain and William Shockley were honored for their invention of the transistor. Philip Anderson's theoretical work on amorphous materials (such as glass) and on superconductivity led to a Nobel Prize in 1977. And in 1978, Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson won the Prize for detecting cosmic microwave radiation from the "big bang" explosion that gave birth to the universe some 18 billion years ago.

Search for knowledge

These scientists and their colleagues at Bell Labs, given the freedom to explore, have proved

time and again the value of investment in research—not only for telecommunications but for society in general. The transistor, for example, revolutionized communications and brought into being entire new industries—indeed, a new industrial society—based on solid-state electronics.

Other Bell Labs advances—products of this same research environment—have included high-fidelity recording, sound motion pictures, long-distance television transmission in the United States, the electrical digital computer, information theory, the silicon solar cell, and the laser. The impact of this work—on almost every field of commerce, industry, education and even medicine—has been incalculable.

The innovation process

Research done at Bell Labs in the past is the basis for the products and services the Bell System offers its customers today, just as the research going on now is the foundation for tomorrow's telecommunications.

Bell Labs scientists—specialists in physics, chemistry,

mathematics and many other disciplines—team their efforts with those of our systems, development and design engineers. They, in turn, work closely with Western Electric manufacturing engineers and with the people of the Bell System operating telephone companies.

This technical integration is the foundation for true innovation. One idea feeds another. A basic scientific discovery can make possible entire new technologies and products for telecommunications, and a concept for a new product or system can stimulate the research to find even more new knowledge. That interaction, that teamwork, has been extremely productive: Bell Labs people have received 18,645 patents between our founding in 1925 and the end of 1978.

Sometimes, the search for knowledge may lead to a Nobel Prize. Often, it benefits all of society. And always, its ultimate aim is better service for Bell System customers.

Bell Laboratories
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Murray Hill, N.J. 07974



Bell Laboratories

Keeping your communications system the best in the world.

away for the next day's picnic—Camembert cheese, and salad, and salami, and made a wonderful tomato salad in two minutes and opened the white wine and had it all on the table in five amazing competent minutes.

"That's all we need, darling," Martin said. "You are funny with your fish-and-chip Saturdays! What could be nicer than this? Or simpler?"

Nothing, except there was Sunday's buffet lunch for nine gone, in place of Saturday's fish for six, and would the fish stretch? No.

Katie had had quite a lot to drink. She pecked Martha on the forehead. "Funny little Martha," she said. "She reminds me of Janet. I really do like Janet." Colin did not want to be reminded of Janet, and said so. "Darling, Janet's a fact of life," Katie said. "If you'd only think about her more, you might manage to pay her less." And she yawned and stretched her lean, childless body and smiled at Colin with her inviting, naughty-little-girl eyes, and Martin watched her in admiration.

Martha got up and left them and took a paint pot and put a coat of white gloss on the bathroom wall. The white surface pleased her. She was good at painting. She produced a smooth, even surface. Her legs throbbed. She feared she might be getting varicose veins. Outside in the garden the children played badminton. They were bad-tempered, but relieved to be able to look up and see their mother working, as usual: making their lives forever better and nicer: organizing, planning, thinking ahead, sidestepping disaster, making reparations: like a mother hen, fussing and irritating: part of the natural scenery of the world.

An egg and an orange each child, each day. Then nothing too bad would go wrong. And it hadn't. Ah, smile, Martha, smile. Domestic happiness depends on you. Twenty-one times fifty-two oranges a year. Each one to be purchased, carried, peeled, and washed up after. And what about potatoes? Twelve times fifty-two pounds a year? Martin liked his potatoes carefully peeled. He couldn't bear to find little cores of black in the mouthful. ("Well, it isn't very nice, is it?": Martin.)

Martha dreamed she was eating coal, by handfuls, and liking it.

SATURDAY NIGHT. Martin made love to Martha three times. Three times! How virile he was, and clearly turned on by the sounds from the spare room. Martin said he loved her. Martin always did. He was a courteous lover: he knew the importance of foreplay. So did Martha. Three times.

Ah, sleep. Jolyon had a nightmare. was awakened by a moth. Martin slept through everything. Martha pattered about the in the night. There was a moon. She sat window and stared out into the summer for five minutes, and was at peace, and went back to bed to be fresh for the mo-

But she wasn't. She slept late. The went out for a walk. They'd left a note. siderate note: "Didn't wake you. You tired. Had a cold breakfast so as not to too much mess. Leave everything till v back."

But it was ten o'clock, and guests coming at noon, so she cleared away bread, the butter, the crumbs, the smeared jam, the spoons, the spilled sugar, the the milk (sour by now), the dirty plate swept the floors, and tidied up quickly, grabbed a cup of coffee, and prepared to a rice-and-fish dish, and a chocolate m and sat down in the middle to eat a bread and jam herself. Broad hips. S membered the office work in her file and she wouldn't be able to do it. Martin th it was ridiculous anyway for her to bring home at the weekends. "It's your hol he'd say. "Why should they impose?"

Martha loved her work. She didn't h smile at it. She just did it.

Katie came back upset and crying. S in the kitchen while Martha worked, and glass after glass of gin and bitter lemon. liked ice and lemon in gin. Martha pa all the drink out of her wages. It was p the deal—the contract by which she we to work. All things to cheer the spirit, wise depressed by a working wife and n were to be paid for by Martha. Drink days, petrol, outings, puddings, elect heating: it was quite a joke between th didn't really make any difference: it wa joint money, after all. Amazing how M wages were creeping up, almost to the l Martin's. One day they would overtake. what?

Work, honestly, was a piece of cake.

Anyway, poor Katie was crying. Colin discovered, kept a photograph of Jan the children in his wallet. "He's not f her. He pretends he is, but he isn't. Sh him by a stranglehold. It's the kids. His kids. Moaning Mary and that little Joanna. It's all he thinks about. I'm nol

But Katie didn't believe it. She kne was somebody all right. Colin came in fury. He took out the photograph and s to it, bitterly, with a match. Up in smok went. Mary and Joanna and Janet. The fell on the floor. (Martha swept them up

and Katie had gone. It hardly seemed to do so when they were still there.) "Go back to her," Katie said. "Go back to don't care. Honestly, I'd rather be on my You're a nice old-fashioned thing. Run then. Do your thing, I'll do mine. Who ?"

They were reconciled before lunch, up in spare room. Harry and Beryl Elder arrived twelve-thirty. Harry didn't like to hurry on days; Beryl was flustered with apologies for their lateness.

They'd brought artichokes from their gar-

"Wonderful," Martin cried. "Fruits of the earth! Let's have a wonderful soup! Don't fret, Martha. I'll do it."

"Don't fret," Martha clearly hadn't been meaning enough. She was in danger, Martin thought, of ruining everyone's weekend. There was an emergency in the garden very shortly after lunch: a elm tree that had probably got Dutch elm disease—and Martha finished the artichokes. The lid flew off the blender and there was artichoke purée everywhere.

"Let's have lunch outside," Colin said. "It's no work for Martha."

Martin frowned at Martha: he thought the appearance of martyrdom in the face of guests was unforgivable offense.

Everyone happily joined in taking the furniture out, but it was Martha's experience that had ever helped to bring it in again. Jolyon was stung by a wasp. Jasper sneezed and coughed from hay fever and couldn't find the tissues and he wouldn't use toilet paper. Beryl only remembered the tissues, darling": Martin.)

Beryl Elder was nice. "Wonderful to eat," she said, fetching the cream for the pudding, while Martha fished a fly from the frying Brie ("You shouldn't have bought ripe, Martha": Martin)—"except it's just the other woman has to do it. But at least it isn't me." Beryl worked, too, as a secretary, and sent the boys to boarding school, where she'd rather they weren't. But her husband was from a grand army family, and she'd been a typist when he married her, so her life was a mass of amends, one way or another.

Martha found the fish-and-rice dish rather strange, toyed at it with her fork, and talked about Italian restaurants she knew. Martin lay on the sofa, soaking in the sun: crying, "Oh, this is my life." He made coffee, nobly, and the lid flew off the grinder and there were coffee beans everywhere in the kitchen, especially in among the shelves of cookbooks that Martin gave Martha for Christmas. At least they didn't have to be brought back every weekend. ("The

burglars won't have the sense to steal those": Martin.)

Beryl fell asleep, and Katie watched her, quizzically. Beryl's mouth was open and she had a lot of fillings, and her ankles were thick and her waist was going and she didn't look after herself. "I love women," Katie sighed. "They look so wonderful asleep. I wish I could be an earth mother."

Beryl woke with a start and nagged her husband into going home, which he clearly didn't want to do, so didn't; Beryl thought she had to get back because his mother was coming round later. Nonsense!

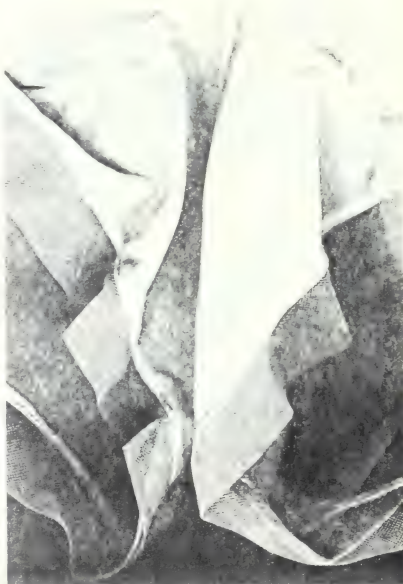
"She does come on strong, poor soul," laughed Katie when they'd finally gone. "I'm never going to marry again"—and Colin looked at her yearningly because he wanted to marry her more than anything in the world, and Martha cleared the coffee cups.

"Oh, don't do that," Katie said, "do just sit down, Martha, you make us all feel bad," and Martin glared at Martha, who sat down, and Jenny called out for her and Martha went upstairs and Jenny had started her first period and Martha cried and cried and knew she must stop because this must be a joyous occasion for Jenny or her whole future would be blighted, but for once, Martha couldn't.

Her daughter, Jenny; wife, mother, friend.

"Martha dreamed she was eating coal, by handfuls, and liking it."

HARPER'S
AUGUST 1979

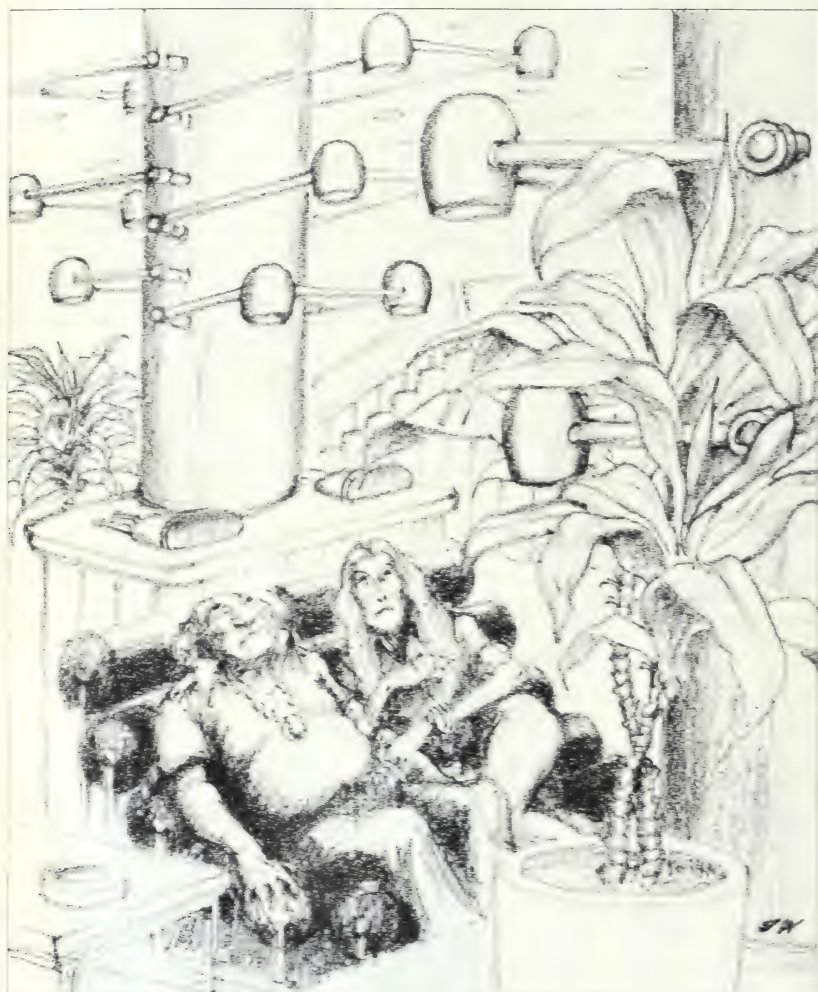


Photocopied garments by Paul Hill. Koribee Gallery, New York

IN OUR TIME

by Tom Wolfe

Great Moments in Contemporary Architecture



The Clients' First Night in the House

"Well, maybe we'll make *Architectural Digest* anyway."

"We damn well better."

FROM ALPHA TO X RAY

Glossary of scientific terms

by Wayne Biddle

FEW SCIENTISTS or engineers possess the verbal cunning, let alone the will, to lie successfully in public. Their use of specialized words and hybrid terms seem to stretch normal semantics to the result of the same fear that leads all of us to become less articulate in front of large audiences. There is also, of course, great utility much of their language has in the profession, where years of rather rigorous training and a love for elegant shorthand produce a kind of word blindness. This is different from the "bureaucratese" of lawyer or government officials, who often cannot understand each other. Yet we make mistakes when we assume that the technology affecting our lives is too complex to explain to non-technologists. It may be too complex to explain quickly, too abstract at its intellectual roots to clarify every nuance. But it will never be a technological system of such importance so complicated that an outcast cannot ask questions about its costs and benefits. Such a system would be at the very heart of grossly uneconomical, if only because of the expense of finding and educating those who are considered able to maintain it.

What follows is a list of words that have come from the safe containment of university research labs, and technical industries. Some of them are by now part of our common tongue, though they may have strayed from their origins. Others are fresh from the professional jargon, still shrouded in the age-old mystery that makes people distrust what they utter. I found all of them in the daily newspapers—which hardly provide definitions—or in books of science that also reach a lay readership. It is right to decide who is using the language properly and who is not is everyone's. No one is required.

ABSOLUTE ZERO: Temperatures lower than it are unattainable. The precise point itself (-459.7°F.) is also impossible to reach, because volume would vanish there. Wondrous properties occur near absolute zero. Electrical resistance disappears from some metals (superconductivity). Liquid helium climbs over the edges of containers to reach a lower level (superfluidity).

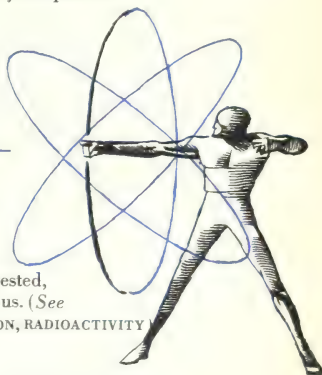
ACCESSING: Computer jargon for making contact with information stored in another location. In an age when any activity that does not involve computers is considered primitive, the professions have quickly adopted it.

ALPHA RADIATION:

Positively charged particles often emitted when an atom's nucleus disintegrates.

They are a negligible hazard to us externally, because they cannot penetrate very far and can be stopped by a sheet of paper. When ingested, however, they are dangerous. (See

FISSION PRODUCT, RADIATION, RADIOACTIVITY)



ALTRUISM: Much animal behavior cannot be explained in terms of natural selection acting on an individual. At first sight, it is difficult to explain the evolution of altruism, whereby one individual increases the welfare of another at the expense of his own. But genes last far longer than the individuals who carry them. As a result, a gene complex may

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Wayne Biddle FROM ALPHA TO X RAY

spread through a population without regard to an individual's survival. For example, if you die to save ten close relatives, one copy of the "kin altruism" genetic message is lost, but a large number—those of your relatives—are saved.

BETA RADIATION: Negatively charged beta particles can penetrate a centimeter or so under human skin after emission from a disintegrating atomic nucleus. It takes about a millimeter of aluminum to stop these rays. Externally, then, they are more dangerous than alpha particles, but internally they are less potent.

BIOMASS, BIOSPHERE: Suitable combinations of the ingredients needed for life are found only in a narrow layer covering the Earth. This biosphere extends about five miles up into the atmosphere and five miles down into the sea. Living organisms are not distributed evenly through it. That is, few life forms thrive in polar regions, while many live in tropical rain forests. The amount of material that is part of the bodies of these organisms is the biomass.

BIT: In computer theory, the information content of any message is described in units called bits, which is short for "binary digits." Any properly phrased question can be answered by a single binary digit—0 or 1, yes or no. The operator of a typical IBM 370 computer system might have more than 100 million bits readily available to him. The human brain can handle around 10 trillion bits, though most are never used and there is some redundancy.

BLACK BODY: If it existed, a black body would absorb all and reflect none of the radiation falling upon it. Such a thing would, when illuminated, look absolutely black, invisible except where its edges might be revealed against the background. No actual substance or object behaves this way, though some soots approximate it, and the mouth of an empty whiskey jug is known to look awfully dark. The concept is of theoretical value in radiation and temperature studies.

BODY BURDEN: The amount of a radioactive substance, expressed in microcuries (millionths of a curie), deposited in the human

body. It is somewhat inaccurate to talk of a particular number as being the maximum permissible body burden. Occupational standards are stated according to oral or inhalation, with specification of critical organs, for more than 200 radioactive varieties. (See CURIE, RAD, REM)

BREEDER: The potential energy supply of nuclear reactors is currently rather limited because fissionable uranium is getting scarce—at least in economical ores. The breeder reactor solves this problem by lacing the nuclear fuels of uranium 235 and plutonium with non-fissionable varieties. Under proper conditions, these are converted to fissionable material. We eat our cake and have it too: consuming nuclear fuel and generating more to replace it. There is fear about the risk of nuclear-weapons proliferation, however, because one of the by-products of the process can readily be made into bombs.

CELL: In 1665 an Englishman applied the word to the chambers in a thin section of cork. Almost 200 years later, German physicist Rudolf Virchow originated the theory that cells are the basic units of life. Most of our knowledge about cells has depended on the gradual improvement of microscopes. The notion of basic structural and functional units is so attractive, so the word has many uses—flashlight batteries to groups of Communist propagandists.

CHROMOSOMES: Threadlike structures in human body cells that carry genes, the units of heredity. Each parent contributes chromosomes to the fertilized egg from which an individual develops. In the 1920s it was known that chromosomes contain DNA, RNA, and proteins. Since Watson and Crick's famous work on the structure of DNA, we have learned much about the nucleic acids, but the importance of the chromosomal proteins is still a puzzle. (See NUCLEIC ACIDS)

COMFORT ZONE: We all have our favorite temperatures, humidities, and breezes. These conditions vary according to season and to some extent depend on one's native climate, too. In the United States the comfort zone established by the American Society of Heating and Air Conditioning Engineers lies between 73°F. and 77°F. at between 20 and 60 percent humidity. In England the zone of



°F., in the tropics on 78°F. Recent fed-
energy-saving guidelines show how the
can change according to one's ability to
or it.

COMPUTER SIMULATION: The best thing
computers is their speed. Given the
equations, say the relationship between
temperature and pressure in a nuclear reac-
computer can try millions of combina-
of possible values. With enough of these
ons to represent a whole sequence of
, the computer will provide some notion
at might happen next. The Brookhaven
Laboratory did a computer simula-
to estimate the damage to fuel elements
ree Mile Island.

COSMIC RAYS: As far as man is concerned,
ggest radiation hazard in the natural
nment comes from these waves of en-
orm space. They may produce genetic
ons in human reproductive cells. There
much we can do about them, so we
it. (See **MUTATION**)

CURIE: One curie was originally defined as
diation from one gram of radium, the
ows-in-the-dark material. Because of ex-
tent uncertainties, a curie was redefined
ns of a particular number of disintegra-
per second. It does not measure ab-
l dose.

DECIBEL: A unit used to measure the rela-
power of two sounds. In acoustics, the
threshold of human hearing is kept as
reference intensity, in order to set up an
ate scale. The rustle of leaves in a gentle
is about 10 decibels; traffic on a busy
is about 68 decibels; the threshold of
s 130 decibels.

ECOLOGICAL ECOLOGY, ECOSYSTEM: The word *ecol-*
was coined by a German biologist in
but hardly anyone outside scientific
heard it until a hundred years later.
gists study patterns of distribution and
ance of organisms, how they are main-
in the short run, and how they change
evolution. An ecosystem consists of all
fferent organisms in an area together
the physical environment they live in
(up, field, dung heap). The fact that pop-
ulations of ecology sprang from Califor-

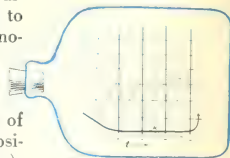
nia in the late Sixties may explain their quasi-
religious nature.

ENTROPY: Why does a chunk of ice use the
heat from its surroundings to melt? The cru-
cial factor is the tendency of anything to
change toward a condition of greater disorder,
e.g., solid to liquid. So we say that a
disordered state has a higher entropy than an
ordered one. In a gambler's mind, we could
say that the state called "seven" has a higher
entropy than the state called "snake eyes,"
since there are six ways to roll a seven but
just one way to roll a two. Many back-fence
philosophers, most of them former chemis-
try majors, love to apply this concept to the
human condition. Nobody has outdone Thom-
as Pynchon's short story "Entropy."

ETHOLOGY: The study of the way animals
behave in nature. Its founding fathers, Kon-
rad Lorenz and Niko Tinbergen, were the
first "field behaviorists" to win a Nobel Prize
(in 1973, with Karl von Frisch, who discov-
ered honeybee communicative dancing). Ori-
ginally a European school of thought, its em-
phasis on evolution and the adaptive values
of behavior is counterbalanced by B. F. Skin-
ner and the American school of experimental
psychology.

EXTRAPOLATION: Essentially a euphe-
mism for "winging it." Mathematically, it is
the extension of a relationship between two
or more varying quantities beyond the range
covered by knowledge. When you extrapolate,
you tell what you think will happen based
mostly upon a continuation of what has al-
ready happened. Engineers are expected to
be clever extrapolators. Politicians and econo-
mists are generally less adept.

FISSION: The nucleus of an atom is made of
densely packed particles called protons (posi-
tively charged) and neutrons (no charge).
The difficult thing to understand is how the
protons can stay together in such a small
space without flying apart (like trying to hold
together the same ends of many magnets).
Evidently there is a lot of energy inside being
used to bind them up. The observed fact is
that the mass of a nucleus is always less than
the sum of the masses of its protons and neu-
trons. According to Einstein's $E=mc^2$, this
deficiency is equivalent to the binding energy.
By breaking up heavy nuclei into lighter ones,



Wayne Biddle FROM ALPHA TO X RAY

some energy is released. Such fission conversions are the present basis for nuclear power.

FISSION PRODUCT: The fission of one pound of uranium 235 releases the heat equivalent of 1,000 tons of coal. That is why we spend so much time, money, and exasperation trying to do it. Unfortunately, it also produces a myriad of less useful things—many harmless, some deadly. The actual amount of radioactive isotopes (varieties of one element) that are left after fission can only be estimated statistically, since the uranium breaks up in more than one way. Of the 200 or so possible isotopes, various forms of seven cause particular worry because of their ability to enter the food chain, their long half-life, or both: iodine, strontium, krypton, xenon, cesium, cobalt, rubidium. (See HALF-LIFE)

FLUX: Flux is the volume or mass or energy flowing across a given area in a given time. For water in a garden hose, it might be measured in gallons per minute at the open end. For radiation, it might be rads per hour at a certain point of interest near the source.

FUSION: Certain types of hydrogen can be fused to provide much more energy than was required to start the process. The problem with getting the energy is that nuclear fusion occurs only under the contradictory, though not impossible, conditions of high temperature and high density. In the hydrogen bomb, fusion is triggered by fission. But no one has yet succeeded in producing the sustained, controlled fusion required for power generation. Since there is enough of the right hydrogen in a gallon of water (separable at a cost of two or three cents) to be equivalent in energy to 300 gallons of gasoline, we may assume that efforts to produce the requisite technology will continue.

GAMMA RAYS: Gamma rays, like X rays, are a dangerous type of radiation. They penetrate flesh (it takes about five centimeters of lead to stop a typical one), destroying tissue and inflicting burns. Since they can go to extreme depths, they constitute a hazard to the body. Gamma emission frequently accompanies alpha or beta emission.

GENOME, GENOTYPE, PHENOTYPE: It is impossible to know the genetic makeup, or

genotype, of an individual who shows an inant trait (like brown eyes) merely by inspection. There might be a blue-eye nestled inside. The phenotype is the actual expression of the genes, observable in some cases as in blood-type tests. Phenotype also includes the results of environment acting on expression, as when a normal child is stunted by hunger. The total of an individual's genetic material is called the genome.

GRADIENT: A sophisticated version of the word *grade*, as used to mean "slope." The gradient at which a varying quantity, such as temperature or pressure, changes is called a gradient. There are steep gradients, gentle gradients, et cetera. The term also has a specialized meaning in vector mathematics.

HALF-LIFE: Radioactive substances undergo a statistical process essentially unaffected by temperature or local chemistry. One does not know which specific nucleus of a collection will disintegrate next; only the probability can be stated. The half-life is the time required for half of any collection to disintegrate. If the half-life is ten minutes, for example, half the nuclei go in the first ten, half the remainder in the second ten, and so on. Sometimes people talk about the half-life of a neighborhood in their neighborhood.

MELTDOWN: With its double-barreled connotation of human folly and hellfire, this is a kind of word that moves instantly into the vernacular. It may be *the* catchword of the decade. That the actual occurrence of a meltdown is one of the most extremely rare of all the bad things that can happen to a reactor is somehow beside the point for the record: If the radioactive material in the core of a reactor loses the coolant that keeps its temperature manageable, it might become uncontrollable through its containment walls. Thereafter, there can be a terrible release of radiation.

MODEL: The concept of building a model to approximate something in nature is as old as man. It is a constant in modern thought. There are three main classes of models. Mathematical ones are composed of equations and step-by-step calculations. Physical ones, like the airfoils or scale models used in wind tunnels, represent a direct scaling down of a real object. Logical ones are sometimes fruitful ways of organizing or simplifying complex ideas. Simulation



y related concept. Models in the natural sciences can be very impressive, but those in the social sciences often seem rather lame. (COMPUTER SIMULATION)

Mutation: Man is a precision device self-improved by haphazard changes. Mutations are caused by radioactivity in the environment, cosmic rays from space, or by chemical, spontaneous rearrangements of genetic material. Accidentally useful ones provide the working basis for biological evolution, but in large organisms they are almost always harmful.

Neurons, Synapses: Most neurobiologists believe that neurons, the cells that carry messages in the nervous system, are the basic elements in brain function. The arrangement and number of neurons and their synapses or links, determine an animal's behavior and response. An average neuron in a human brain has between 1,000 and 10,000 synapses with nearby neurons. Some contain information in thinking; some must be concerned with motor and other nonthinking functions; some are blank.

Nucleic Acid: The nucleic acids include the largest molecules formed by organisms, DNA and RNA. The small molecules that be joined to make them are called nucleotides. A typical DNA molecule in a human chromosome is composed of about 5 billion nucleotides. They play a vital part in controlling the growth, activity, and reproduction of cells.

Pathogen, Toxin: A pathogen is any organism capable of causing disease. It is meaningless to talk about pathogens without reference to their host, which may or may not have various degrees of immunity. A toxin is a poison produced organically, generally by bacteria. Toxins are often known by the names of the diseases they cause.

Permafrost: That ground which the Alaskan pipeline must never melt. The annual mean temperature is so low there that even summer rains fail to thaw out the soil. It has been frozen for thousands of years, a basic factor in the region's ecology. If heat from the flowing oil were not carefully dissipated, a lot of the pipeline would get stuck in a monstrous bog.

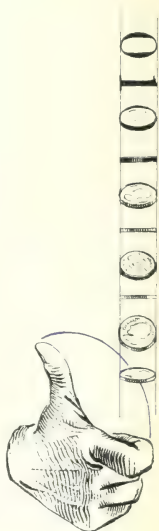
PHOTOELECTRIC EFFECT: When light falls upon certain metals, they emit an electric current. Sixty years ago this phenomenon produced an important chapter in physics, since it could not be explained by classical theory. Present attention results from the hope for generating commercial power with sunlight. Until recently, direct applications were limited to space satellites, where power requirements were small and money was no object. As the efficiency of the process is improved and the unit cost comes down, this energy source will look better.

PLASMA: The word enjoys two entirely unrelated meanings. Blood plasma is the fluid in which cellular bodies are suspended. It makes up about 55 percent of the total volume, transporting wastes, digested food, and antibodies. Plasma physics is the study of highly ionized gases, which are ordinary gases heated until their constituent particles become electrically charged. Most of the matter in the universe is in such a state. Fluorescent lamps use plasma effects, though very inefficiently. The central problem in the quest for controlled fusion energy has been the design of a magnetic field that can allow stable containment of plasma fuels, which are far too hot to be held by material walls. (See FUSION)

PROBABILITY: The chance that a prescribed event will occur is represented by a number greater than 0, and less than 1. An impossibility is 0, an inevitability is 1. Intuitive problems arise with the use of this word because very few things are absolutely impossible or inevitable in nature. You can, for instance, calculate that the probability of sunrise tomorrow morning is less than 1. This should not be cause for concern, however. By the same token, if the probability of a runaway reactor—a nuclear explosion—is figured to be "astronomically small," we can discount it almost as easily as that cold, black dawn. The calculations can be tricky.

QUAD: When measuring how much energy entire societies use, one needs a big unit. One quad is a quadrillion Btu's (British thermal units), something so big that it is totally meaningless. A quad costs about \$2 billion, and America now consumes eighty-five of them every year.

RAD: When one measures radiation, one



Wayne Biddle FROM ALPHA TO X RAY

wants to know the intensity of the source and how much is being absorbed by various objects. To get around the dependence of energy absorption on the medium it travels through, the "radiation absorbed dose" was introduced. It measures the absorption of energy of any type in any medium. (See ROENTGEN)

RADIATION: Visible light and the tanning action of the sun are so familiar that one protects oneself from their minor hazards almost instinctively. Yet they are to be found along the same wave spectrum of radiation as the most deadly X rays. The biological effects of radiation include alterations in the functions of cells. Acute exposure is fairly well understood, but chronic exposure to small doses is not. It is widely accepted that there is no such thing as a no-effect dose.

RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT: Originally the product of distant atomic explosions, where debris is raised to great atmospheric heights, fallout has come to mean any spread of fission products from the immediate vicinity of their release. Close-in fallout occurs mostly downwind in a matter of hours, accounting for 20 to 80 percent of the products. Tropospheric fallout remains in the air for weeks or months, falling mainly with precipitation. Delayed or stratospheric fallout results from high-yield bombs, which thrust huge clouds of debris that can be stored as long as ten years in the upper atmosphere.

RADIOACTIVITY: Even though a light bulb properly can be said to emit radiation, it is not radioactive. The term refers specifically to the breakup of an atom's nucleus, which can be natural or induced. Appreciable amounts of natural radioactivity exist in the environment because the unstable elements present at Creation have half-lives comparable to the Earth's age. Stars (fusion reactions) are radioactive, as are some old wrist watches.

REM: "Roentgen equivalent [in] man" was designed to compensate for differences in the effectiveness of radiations. One rem is the quantity of radiation that produces the same biological effect in man as one roentgen of X or gamma irradiation. The effect, however, depends on the part of the body exposed and the type of radiation. The standard safe exposure, first set in 1925, was 1,000 millirems (thousandths of a rem) per week. Today it is

just under 100 millirems per week. A X ray exposes one to 20 or 30 millirems average per capita dose of natural background radiation in the United States is 130 rems per year. Nobody knows what threshold of absolute safety is, but obviously it is a waste of time to worry about less than

ROENTGEN: The original dosage unit describing exposure to X rays or gamma rays in air, named in 1928 for the discoverer, Wilhelm Roentgen.

SELECTION PRESSURE: In evolutionary theory, this is the influence of the environment in selecting for survival and reproduction a particular set of genetic characteristics. Predation and competition are important selection pressures. Those shadings of the process that imply choice or will must be discarded, because the process is purely natural.

SOCIOBIOLOGY: A blend of ethology, psychology, and genetics concocted at Harvard by the entomologist Edward O. Wilson is its most famous proponent. Some people wish he had stayed in insect societies; others believe he holds the key to explaining why this life is a vale of tears. Either way, he will always have the Pulitzer Prize for *On Human Behavior* and the title of the textbook *Sociobiology* each year. The field tends to be an academic battleground between humanists and scientific determinists.

TRANSIENT: Most innocently, this means what varies in time, as opposed to a permanent state. Over the years, however, it has come to be used instead of "accident," "abnormal," or "out of control." The poor engineer's man who called the fiasco at Three Mile Island "a transient" meant merely that the reactor had deviated from its regular, predictable behavior.

X RAYS: X rays account for 95 percent of the man's radiation exposure other than the cosmic rays. Most of this comes from medical diagnosis, but some stems from faulty household electronic appliances. Before the dangers of exposure to X rays were fully appreciated, they were one of the great plagues of medical science and caused untold damage to innocent patients.



DOWN WITH PUBLIC TELEVISION

Carnegie Broadcasting System

by Stephen Chapman

TWO YEARS AGO the Carnegie Corporation, that bulwark of high-mindedness, felt the urge to issue one of its periodic subject this time was public television, which is known to the great of the populace as the station one past on the way from "Hawaii" to "Barney Miller."

can safely assume that the people Carnegie knew at the outset pre-etch what they thought should be about public television. More publicity should be spent on it. That is a Carnegie study had proposed ten years ago, and now seemed the time to repeat the thought. But can't get to be a respected outfit Carnegie just by mailing out press releases. What you must do is assemble a group of luminaries, call it "the distinguished Carnegie Commission on the Future of Public Broadcasting," have it spend eighteen months pondering important questions. In the end, the luminaries will issue a 393-page report (which few will read but many will praise) saying what you want said.

The Carnegie Corporation was careful to select persons who would treat matters with the proper reverence and not ask silly questions. Among those chosen were such reliables as William J. McGowan, Walter Heller, John W. Gardner, Robert H. Hale, and Bill Moyers* (how could Heschburg get left out, I don't know). The body included several well-known members who were more than worthy still, since most of them had been at Gardner, in another role, to regard as a conflict of interest:

Walter Heller is retiring as president of the Council of Economic Advisors. Robert H. Hale wrote *Excellence*. Bill Moyers is a public-television per-

son that is to say, their livelihoods depend directly or indirectly on the continuing flow of tax dollars into public broadcasting. Among these were Henry Caution, director of the South Carolina Educational Television Network, Virginia Duncan, a television producer and member of the board of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and Josie Johnson, a member of the board of National Public Radio. It was as if the Committee on the Present Danger had assembled a task force to study the future of national defense and stacked it with the chairman of Lockheed, a three-star general, and Norman Podhoretz.

The commission went about its business in the time-honored tradition of such undertakings. It met with no fewer than 227 public-broadcasting "professionals," visited public-broadcasting stations all over the country and in several foreign lands, held public and private seminars, retained twenty-two

private consultants, and solicited nearly a hundred staff papers and memorandums. (One wonders if most of these people—the staff of public television and radio stations; the employees of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting; National Public Radio; the Public Broadcasting System; the independent producers who contract to do public-television shows; the consultants who feed on government contracts—might not have interests of their own to promote as well as those of an amorphous public.) But no matter. The second commission suggested what the first commission had suggested—that is, the government should spend more money on public broadcasting.

Why should Carnegie have spent sums of its own cash to replot all this old ground? The answer is suggested by the makeup of the commission and the people whose opinions it sought out. The report can best be read not as a disinterested analysis of public broadcasting, but as a brief on behalf of public broadcasting's entrenched interests. The 1967 report represented an effort to create the nucleus of a full-fledged public-broadcasting system in the United States. It succeeded spectacularly. By creating this nucleus, the government also gave breath to a new interest group: the programmers, producers, administrators, journalists, actors, and hangers-on who pull income and status from this federally subsidized medium. The 1979 report is intended to further the interests of such people, and of those others who constitute the audience for public broadcasting.

The public-television system that now exists is what the first Carnegie

Stephen Chapman is a staff writer of *The New Republic*.



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DOWN WITH PUBLIC TELEVISION

Commission asked for—an expanded system of noncommercial, government-supported and -supervised TV (a medium previously known as “educational television”). Carnegie had called for the creation of a federal Corporation for Public Television to disburse new money for programming and construction to public stations and to shield them from the political pressures the money might bring with it. Congress, still in the thrall of Lyndon Johnson’s Great Society, quickly enacted almost everything the commission wanted and called the result the Public Broadcasting Act of 1967. Federal support for public television grew rapidly in the succeeding years. In 1969, the government spent altogether only \$10 million on public broadcasting (including radio and television); by 1977 it was spending \$118 million—an increase of nearly 1200 percent, which is a healthy growth rate by any standard. Public television is now accessible to more than 80 percent of the population.

IF THE COMMISSION expected its proposals to have the impact of the first Carnegie report, it was disappointed. There were the perfunctory salvos from the expected critics (the *Wall Street Journal*, James J. Kilpatrick), whose very hostility could be counted on to certify the work’s credibility and importance. And there was the predictable endorsement by the *New York Times*, which called the report “shrewd and forward-looking” and agreed that what public TV needs is more federal money. For the most part, though, it was simply ignored. The White House showed no interest in pressing the commission’s cause, and Capitol Hill greeted the report with indifference.

The reception must have surprised the commission’s members, who don’t doubt public broadcasting’s importance, or their own. They honored the medium in language excessive for the Resurrection. Surely that squat little box in your living room has never been depicted in more imaginative terms. “The electronic media provide an immediacy and intimacy that can bring Americans together, teach us, and inspire us,” the commission intones. “They give us the tools to lead the world out of ignorance and misery. . . . American radio and television are not

just instruments of the marketplace; they are social tools of revolutionary importance. . . . There is a magnificent vision of societal benefit beyond the reach of the commercial networks. . . . We remember the Egyptians for the pyramids, and the Greeks for their graceful stone temples. How shall Americans be remembered? As exporters of sensationalism and salaciousness? Or as builders of magical electronic tabernacles that can in an instant erase the limitations of time and geography, and make us into one people?” The commission solemnly informs us: “The choice is in our hands and the time is now.” Indeed.

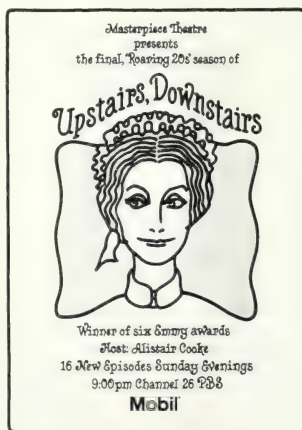
Of course, the precise point of such passages is invariably vague. The reader is left puzzled by such opaque sentences as this: “The institution we now call public broadcasting has reached an unprecedented intersection of the dynamics of American democracy with advanced communications technology as we are drawn inexorably toward the configurations of the 21st century.” And this: “Public broadcasting, by involving itself more deeply in the evolving telecommunications opportunities, could reflect the people’s need for an information context that will not only enhance their lives but their citizenship as well.”

If the commission’s words are frequently hard to follow, their meaning really isn’t. The commission thinks that some changes ought to be made—changes it explains and defends in numbing detail—but that the problems

in public television and radio are too simple. The simplest and most important is money. “There is a commission says, ‘in which means are denied what other consider vital: a flourishing communications service, unencumbered by commercial imperatives.’” President Carter’s budget for fiscal 1978 includes \$172 million for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, which is about a fourth of all the money that will be spent on public broadcasting (the rest comes from state and federal governments, colleges, foundations, private corporations, and public utilities). The commission thinks that a minimum of \$640 million in federal money is necessary to guarantee what it calls a “first-class, full-service public broadcasting system.” In addition, other contributors should ante up \$570 million a year by 1985 (up from \$347 million in 1977). Where will the federal government get the money to more than triple its spending on public broadcasting? The first Carnegie Commission proposed a tax on television, but this one recommends that commercial broadcasters be charged a “special fee” for the right to use the public airwaves. Since that would raise about \$200 million, the commission suggests the remaining \$440 million come out of general revenues.

THE OSTENSIBLE POINT of the commission’s medium has always been to improve programming.

Here the commission goes back to E. B. White’s dictum that commercial television should be judged by itself to the ideal of excellence, rather than by the ideal of acceptability.” In lay terms this means that public television requires government help precisely because not many people watch it. At the point of view of public-television programmers and bureaucrats, E. B. White’s rather inexact standard is that excellence, unlike acceptability, cannot be measured. So deciding what constitutes “excellence” must be left to government agencies and institutions. The determination of what can’t be left to the preferences of the mass viewing audience; in fact, the commission’s logic mass programming incompatible with artistic quality and incompatibility was the original reason for creating a public system. T



networks, driven by the necessity of supporting themselves through advertising, had to appeal to as broad an audience as possible. The first Carnegie Commission thought it highly probable that American viewers apparently preferred "Gilligan's Island" to opera, drama, or news documentaries. The American public wasn't willing to support "excellence" in television programming by watching high-quality shows, then citizens should be expected to support it through their taxes. The second Carnegie Commission doesn't question the logic.

The first commission had grand ambitions for public television, which it was capable of becoming the clear expression of American diversity, of excellence within diversity." In the past, the medium has been somewhat less than excellent or diverse. Programming has charted new frontiers in the medium. The shows that have attracted the largest audiences and the critical praise are predominantly British imports, which require the Public Broadcasting System to do nothing more imaginative than buy what the British Broadcasting Corporation and Independent Television have produced. Does anyone think that "Upstairs, Downstairs" was the best B. White had in mind when he said that television "should be our own, our Chautauqua, our Minskies, our Camelot?"

Public television, as it has evolved over the past twelve years, has also continued to neutralize its principal advantage over the networks—that it does not depend on advertising revenue. Public television doesn't have to subject itself to the same pressure as commercial television to offensive commercials. Public television stations have replaced cigarette and Pepsi ads with their own solicitations and telethons, which are at least as obnoxious as anything on commercial television and are intended to boot. The Carnegie Commission admits rather lamely that most television promotions are "annoying and amateurish" and says stations should continually strive to make television more inventive and less commercial. For all the time wasted in educating viewers, public TV might as well be off going commercial. Doing so would reduce the burden on taxpayers, and, of course, it would also dispel public television's pristine aura.

AT THE TIME the first commission issued its report, one might have been able to argue that Americans didn't watch first-rate shows only because the networks didn't offer any. How could the public express a preference for class if no alternative to mediocre sitcoms, cop shows, and westerns was available? Unfortunately one can no longer make this argument, because the typical American now has a choice: he can watch the standard network fare, or he can tune in the rarefied offerings of public television—"The MacNeil/Lehrer Report," "Live from Lincoln Center." Almost everyone, it turns out, chooses the former. The most popular public-television shows reach no more than about 5 percent of American homes. The least popular network shows—those that get cancelled—generally have twice the audience. In one of the commission's rare spiteful moments, it disparages the commercial networks for their "ruthless pursuit of the least common denominator"—which is a clever way of complaining that they put on programs that a lot of people like.

The people who do watch public television, however, are not without resources to make up what they lack in numbers. As a group, they tend to have much in common with the people who make laws, direct government agencies, and serve on the special commis-

sions of foundations. Compared with the general population, the public-television audience is disproportionately white, affluent, college-educated; it is also concentrated in the Northeast. Hence one is not surprised that satisfying the tastes of this audience should be of paramount concern to the commission's members. But one should keep in mind that the federal subsidy for public broadcasting goes to that part of the populace that is least in need of subsidizing. It is one thing to tax the residents of Fairfield County and Chevy Chase to help out people in Harlem, and entirely another to tax the residents of Harlem to help out people in upper-middle-class exurbs.

Not only does the commission want to increase the federal money spent on public broadcasting; it also seeks to restructure the federal role. Under the current arrangement, Congress appropriates money directly to the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. CPB is responsible for helping to produce and procure shows for public television, which are distributed to stations around the country through the public-television interconnection—the Public Broadcasting System, the closest thing to a public-television network. Aside from spending money, the CPB's principal function is to insulate broadcasters from what the first commission called "improper governmental and political pressure."

The second commission thinks this arrangement hasn't worked very well, and thinks it should be replaced with something called a Public Telecommunications Trust. As envisioned, the trust would have broad responsibility for "leadership, long-range planning, evaluation, and system development" and the more specific duty of insulating public television from insidious political interference. It is supposed to "provide financial accountability to the public" while ensuring "protection from inappropriate interference in sensitive creative and journalistic activities whether it originates inside or outside of public broadcasting." These same somewhat contradictory responsibilities, by the way, have been at the root of just those problems that led the commission to recommend the dismantling of the CPB. Here the commission offers some droll suggestions that betray its Establishment bias. Disillusioned with the "highly politicized"

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DOWN WITH PUBLIC TELEVISION

Presidential appointments to the CPB, it wants to restrict the White House's discretion. "Our plan," the commission says, "is to empanel a group of seven distinguished Americans [some obvious names spring to mind], under the leadership of the Librarian of Congress, to recommend to the President a slate of potential appointees." Protecting the privacy of those fellows is a prime concern: "The staff of the librarian would also perform financial investigation to guard against conflicts of interest, obviating the necessity of full public disclosure." The problem, the commission says, is that disclosure "now constitutes a major deterrent to voluntary public service by people whose service we seek." No doubt it does, but maybe that reflects worse on the sort of people the commission seeks than on full-disclosure requirements. In any event, one wonders where John W. Gardner was when this scheme was endorsed.

The commission thinks this new Public Telecommunications Trust will eliminate the bureaucratic squabbling that has plagued public broadcasting since the CPB was created. The CPB has taken the view that as trustee of the taxpayers' money it is obliged to take an active role in programming decisions. PBS, on the other hand, thinks the CPB exists only to provide it and its member stations with money and to keep Congress and the White House from meddling. It is not at all clear that the new arrangement will help, since bureaucracies inevitably tussle among themselves whenever their responsibilities overlap, or seem to. Under the commission's scheme, the trust would house a Program Services Endowment to underwrite productions directly. This extra layer of bureaucracy, the report says, would serve as a "well-insulated patron of the creative artist, journalist, educator, and communicator." And what would this Program Services Endowment do? "Its only mission will be to support the development by the American creative community of programs and services of the highest quality with a diversity of styles, genres, and contents." The commission regrettably leaves unanswered the question of who will ensure that the endowment carries out this weighty mission properly. All the insulation seems designed to prevent anyone from doing so. The Program

Services Endowment would have its own board, separate from the Public Telecommunications Trust but not, the commission says, entirely independent—"It should not report to Congress." Presumably the endowment would have to answer one way or another to the trust, which in turn would have to answer to Congress, which means that political pressure may somehow get exerted. Certainly the commission's plan appears to guarantee continued wrangling between the people in charge of the money and the people in charge of the shows. If this new layer of bureaucracy doesn't adequately insulate the programmers, then presumably yet another layer can be added, and later still another, and so on.

THERE IS a basic paradox in the commission's proposals. On the one hand the Carnegie group wants the taxpaying public to spend more money on public television. On the other, it insists that the taxpaying public should have even less control over how money is spent than it does now, which isn't much. This last point receives special emphasis, particularly as it relates to the news and "public affairs" programs. Much of the commission's concern grows out of the 1972 veto of the CPB authorization by President Nixon, who resented what he saw (with some reason) as the

predominantly liberal bias of shows. As the commission sees it, public broadcasting is no different from other press medium. "Public broadcasters and program makers be considered instrumentalities of the press, specially protected by the Amendment as an integral part of the democratic process," it says, and concedes that there are limits to becoming an agent of propaganda for any ideological position, geographical elite and without itself up as an arbiter of taste, cultural orthodoxy, public bringing must become a journalistic enterprise that calls events as it sees them. The commission says at one point that public broadcasting should, like all other media, be subject to national requirements for policy," it says at another. Nevertheless that this last sentence has no real meaning. These pronouncements no doubt are intended to allay the fears of people who feel uneasy about the growing power of public broadcasters. But in principle they concede a basic point—namely, that public broadcasting has to be, in some sense, a part of governmental purposes.

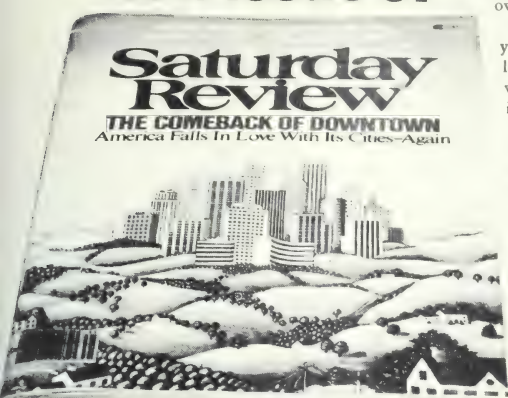
And of course it does. When the commission talks of protecting "rights of stations and producers," it is essentially and occasionally to criticize the government while taking the government's money, it is fostering an illusion of independence. Public television has had a certain leeway in handling controversial topics, but its criticism of the government fall within the confines of the vague welfare-state liberalism that predominates among Americans. Public television can make events with a certain freedom doesn't challenge respected values. The freedom of public television is the freedom of the lap dog to bark and bite. The commission's confidence in public television can maintain its dependence from federal control from a certainty that programs will avoid offending people. If they are balancing acts like Robert MacNeil and Bill Moyers, they need have no fear of interference from their benefactor. If they were, however, put on a weekly show airing the opinions of Marxists, Jehovah's Witnesses, or any number of people beyond the pale, they would get a lot of trouble very quickly. But the ill-

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DOWN WITH PUBLIC TELEVISION

independence is necessary in order to keep control of programming in the hands of public-broadcasting professionals.

THE TALK ABOUT independence also makes public broadcasting sound important and indispensable, which it no longer is (if indeed it ever was). The commission's members, like the Bourbons, have forgotten nothing and learned nothing. When the first Carnegie report was issued, one might credibly have argued that the only way to serve that portion of the television audience that wanted better and more sophisticated programming was through a government-supported noncommercial system. The financial exigencies of providing basic television service through a combination of local stations and national networks effectively made it impossible to aim some programs at small audiences with comparatively esoteric tastes. That remains true for advertiser-supported commercial television. Since 1967, though, improved technology and relaxed government regulations have opened up a range of ways to channel more diverse and imaginative programs to people who want them. Pay-cable, for example, has grown impressively in the past few years, despite its wrestling matches with the restrictive policies of the FCC, which has been most concerned with protecting existing commercial broadcasters. For years cable served, thanks to federal rules, mainly to provide network reception to relatively isolated parts of the country that had few or no local stations. In areas where cable would have competed with, rather than augmented, commercial broadcasters, the FCC stifled it. But recent court decisions and a new skepticism toward regulation at the FCC have permitted cable to expand into new types of service. The most successful experiment so far has been Home Box Office, a national cable system owned by Time Inc., which has grown from 250,000 subscribers in 1975 to more than 2 million today. For an average monthly fee of \$8.17 HBO provides a mix of movies (most about six months after they are released to theaters and before they appear on the networks), variety specials (which it produces), and sports—all without commercials.

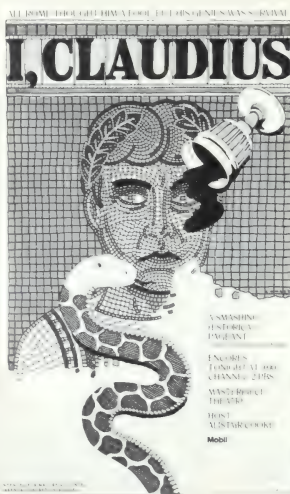
From the standpoint of those dissatisfied with what's offered by the networks, the primary attraction of cable systems like HBO is that they can appeal profitably to small but enthusiastic audiences. Even more specialized shows can be broadcast through systems that charge for each show through special channels that permit computer billing. One cable system showed a La Scala production of *Cavalleria Rusticana* to any subscribers willing to pay \$2.50. There is every reason to expect that freely competing cable systems would offer the sorts of shows currently broadcast on public television—British productions, symphonies, plays, documentaries—if viewers want them. Cable is only the most immediate option. More variety can also be offered through satellite-to-home transmission, video cassettes, and video discs, to name just a few of the possibilities.

If the commission had been intent more on finding ways to improve television and less on advancing the interests of public broadcasters, it at least would have considered whether such developments might supplant the current public-broadcasting system. The commission could hardly be ignorant of cable, yet it says only that the technology should be used to expand the audience served by public television. Naturally, a commission relying heavily on the advice of public-broadcast-

ing people would not hear much for potential competition, particularly from something with the profile of cable. People whose livelihoods depend on the government's support of public broadcasting have little to fear from the proliferation of systems catering to discriminating viewers. Currently there is no alternative to public television. Cable is crucial to the survival of public television, not from the point of view of programmers. In cable and other forms of television, programming decisions are to be based on the preferences of the audience (however small) and on some vague standard of "excellence" that makes the programmer the arbiter of taste, as in public television. Cable and other potential competitors thus threaten the power of public broadcasting.

FOR PUBLIC TELEVISION, such competition also presents a threat. Even if public television offered exactly the same programming, these viewers would have to pay for it themselves instead of fobbing off the cost on the public at large. But self-interest in Chase is no basis on which to base public policy. If some viewers would like a kind of programming and can't pay for it, then what real purpose is served by shifting the cost to those people—generally less than those who care little or nothing about it?

The question the commission fully avoids is the only interesting one: Why have public television stations? There is now no good reason for a government-supported system of public television. It serves different audiences with tastes different from those of the great mass of Americans. It can be served by a variety of other means, ranging from cable to cassette to video. They can be served better since they have no preferences, and not those of the broadcasting bureaucrats, determine what is offered. As for existing public-television stations, they should find ways to support themselves through advertising or donations, or go under. And if they die? Well, they would. That would be a great loss to those whose income, status, and power depend on aggrandizing public television. But for the rest of us life would go on.



EXTREME UNCTION

President and the Bishop

by A. Lawrence Chickering

THE DECLINE of traditional values has absorbed generations of sociologists, philosophers, and poets. Call it the search for "community," "purity," or a "sense of belonging"—they describe a uniquely modern dislocation which results from the decline of traditional authority, especially the of traditional religion.

One wonders why the nation breaks faith with the older institutions and authorities, two recently published books—one by a fundamentalist, the other by a contemporary liberal Episcopalian—tell much of the story.

A fundamentalist inspires special interest because he also happens to be President of the United States. In *The Inner Journey of Jimmy Carter: His Own Words*,*—UPI reporter G. Pippert assembles every word Mr. Carter made about religion during the final six months of his presidential campaign and the first half of his Administration. Though Pippert sets out to present an objective account of the President's life that he has been slighted by the press, he admits that the book goes "far in" to the core of Jimmy Carter's life, only partly correct. In fairness to Carter, it is impossible to believe that any man alive is as tedious as this book represents him to be. To set down, indiscriminately, everything anyone ever said on a single subject can yield only a repetitious, excruciating tract; given his method, Pippert could suffocate even the ghost.

A picture of the President does not help, through the tedium, however, because it explains both why fundamentalist Baptism is repellent to

most people and also why Mr. Carter is well on his way to being the worst President since Millard Fillmore. The man's character is revealed rather clearly in the following quotations:

"What Christ taught about most was pride, that one person should never think he was any better than anybody else."

"Well, I have the inner peace.... Quite often a sense of peace is described as superb self-confidence."

"I have sober thoughts when I'm not sure that I can deal with problems satisfactorily. But I have a lot of confidence in myself. Sometimes I go in a back room and pray a while."

"I am close to God and I do pray

often and seek his guidance before I make any major decision. And my strong Christian beliefs and the fact that I do pray for guidance stand me in good stead."

For 259 pages, the reader is treated to these injunctions against pride by a man notable for his lack of humor—and for overweening pride. The same tone is heard when Mr. Carter speaks on other subjects: the tone of the Baptist preacher, constantly moralizing and appealing to "the intelligence, the idealism, the hope, the sense of brother-

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Elizabeth van Italie

erence and compassion and love [and] patriotism," the "truth, justice, honor." These are empty ritual incantations of the Boy Scout virtues.

I do not wish to demean those virtues. But when the language becomes moralizing, and the speaker begins to whine, the listener is overcome with a sense of phoniness and will respond with embarrassment and/or the impulse to flee. This was my reaction, at least, when Mr. Carter told reporters after a hard week of campaigning that he had asked God to give his opponents "a special blessing." A private prayer is one thing, but the mind recoils at such a public declaration of selfless charity.

When piety is pursued privately, it evokes humility. But when piety is made public, it becomes obsessive and suffused with self-serving righteousness. The more Mr. Carter protests against the sin of pride, the more he communicates his enslavement by it. At best, the piety proclaimed here communicates heroic egomania, at worst, an egomania joined by hypocrisy. The first quality accounts for Mr. Carter's failures during his first two years in the White House: his incapacity to learn anything of the subtleties and nuances of governance. What is there to learn for a man who is in constant touch with God?

One might say in Mr. Carter's defense that his problem is a matter of culture rather than pride. In the secular culture of the urban North, people who are always talking about God are regarded as comical or offensive. In Plains, Georgia, on the other hand, such talk is reflexive. If this is true Mr. Carter may be not proud but insensitive; however, it is difficult to imagine anyone who is that insensitive successfully negotiating his way to the Presidency.

When Pippert tries to soften the apparent prissiness of his subject's character, the result is unconscious humor:

He and his wife read the Bible together nightly. He prays frequently during the day—"almost like breathing".... A well-worn King James version of the Bible lies on his desk in the Oval Office. He observes a strict moral code in his personal behavior. The Carters stopped the serving of hard liquor at White House social events, and he is, for all practical purposes,

a teetotaler. He says he has never smoked a cigarette in his life.

Deep down, according to Pippert, Mr. Carter is just a regular fellow. Thus, although he is a "strict adherent of the Ten Commandments, he shows no hesitancy... spending Sunday afternoon and evening in the White House—at work!" Further, for those concerned that the President is some kind of religious fanatic or freak, Pippert offers reassurance that there is no evidence whatsoever that Mr. Carter speaks in tongues.

The discomfort felt reading this book need not come from indifference or hostility to religion. It comes from other sources, especially from the sense of violation and trespass on the sanctity of personal belief and freedom of worship. In tone if not in content, fundamentalism of all kinds—whether of traditional religion, the cults, or modern political movements—denies free choice and thereby guarantees that the commitment that remains will be morally and spiritually vacuous.

ONE MIGHT THINK that liberals and fundamentalists would differ precisely here, on the question of righteous, dogmatic conviction, but they do not. The Right Reverend Paul Moore, Jr., Episcopal Bishop of New York, presents a curious mimicry of Mr. Carter's self-flattering aphorisms in his book *Take a Bishop Like Me*.^{*} He begins as follows, page one: "December 1974. Silence in the great cathedral. I sat in my bishop's chair, the eyes of the congregation upon me. A moment ago, my hands, the bishop's hands, had been placed on the heads of five men." By the end of the book, 200 pages later, our eyes are still on the bishop: he has not left his chair, has not even let us blink—not for an instant.

Bishop Moore is a leader of the new Episcopal Church—new in the sense that it bears little relation to the old, having pursued some radical changes in the interests of ecumenicism in recent years. Since Bishop Moore himself largely symbolizes what has happened to his church, his book, which is a self-portrait, is also evidence of why the church has gone to pieces.

Bishop Moore is a perfect example

^{*}Published by Harper & Row in March, 1980. 200 pages; \$8.95.

of somebody who exploits effusive emotion and concern in order to attract attention to himself and keep it there. This is the book's only ambition, is clear from the title. Every few pages we observe the bishop with streaming down his cheeks, not by the sinfulness of the world, but by agonizing over his heroic effort to save it. Thus:

"When, as a young man, I witnessed the violence of battle in World War II, the blasphemy of war, I turned out to God for some way to deliver the bloodshed, the anguish, the suffering, the fear. The sense that I was in my mind."

"I remember bursting into tears when I made my confession that before I was consecrated bishop, I seemed too much, too much."

"The emotion started to flow away out of my chest. I paused for a moment, then I quivered. . . . And then it came, the tears which I could not control."

"I embraced her and a few tears filled my eyes."

Bishop Moore's book is a performance, even if a defiant one, based on self-righteous certitude and a found uncertainty and insecurity finally (and predictably) dominate.

When Bishop Moore talks about sin and damnation, he is impressed by his own feelings of unworthiness to be a priest. In fact, guilt is a powerful theme throughout the book. The bishop feels about having been born to receive wealth (made by his "ever-so-gifted grandfather"), and about being a priest and about practically everything he does, felt unworthy, enormously unworthy. He writes about the priesthood

Imagine always, always how people know you are a priest, holding you to a higher standard of behavior. Think of having to curb your language (a problem I still have!), of having to be careful of your life style. . . . But all, how presumptuous to put on the symbolic robes of Christ and stand before the altar in His name and to say those terrible words "This is My Body which is given for you, This is My Blood which is shed for you"; to see your hands, which have touched so many things, touching the holy B

Here he identifies the point at

and pride come together: under-
all his weeping about unworthi-
an idea of Perfection as a pos-
standard of performance.

ite the pain, however, ordination
priesthood leaves one "perma-
changed." "You feel the power
Holy Spirit, so it seems, entering
erves, entering your mind, filling
nermost crevices of your uncon-
At that moment body, mind,
n, spirit, soul, are open, vulner-
let."

cially vulnerable. For in its re-
sense ordination symbolizes a
al event, which does not neces-
occur just because one kneels
a bishop. On the other hand, if
ion's only real accomplishment
secration of egomania, the im-
e high will be followed quickly
rwhelming guilt and by feelings
orthiness. In this vein, it is easy
erstand why Bishop Moore's ego
to go into orbit in response to
ent's secular importance: his
ion on the earthly pecking or-
the Righteous. After all, for the
hteous where is higher social
to be found other than in the
ood?

in these mundane terms that
Moore argues the case in favor
ordination of women: to give
equal-status opportunities, an
f stupefying vulgarity. There
e legitimate reasons to ordain
but they have nothing to do
creasing access to the divine so-
lister.

op Moore's obsession with
ment and its accompanying
consistent with his veneration
everything progressive in society,
th, and of modernism. In the
the passion for the new is most
ing among those who have lost
ense of vocation. It is especially
e in middle-aged men, uncon-
with the authority that attaches
and hungry for the recognition
approval of the beatific young.
Moore recalls the aging hipster
Sixties, armed for the status bat-
turtleneck, Levi's, and mutton-
trying to be young, celebrating
—and all the while earning the
e (and deserved) contempt of

quite explicit about the impor-
f fashion, remarking in a recent
that "the greatness of the Epis-

copal Church lies in its ability to em-
brace every trend and wind of change"
(and therefore, presumably, in its ut-
ter lack of interest in enduring values).
Despite Bishop Moore's desperation to
be contemporary and "with it," his ob-
session is ten years out of date. But
he tries nonetheless, going on and on
about sex and liberation and sex and
psychologists and sex and...

The bishop is into sex. He tells us
about his repressed, puritanical up-
bringing, how he discovered sex is not
a dirty word, and how he discovered
Freud. It is all in the spirit of a child
who has just heard his first dirty word,
tells it to everybody in sight, and gig-
gles uproariously. It would be touch-
ing if it were not so inappropriate.

Insofar as one can discern Bishop
Moore's position at all, his sexual en-
lightenment prompts his position on
ordaining open homosexuals. Early in
the book he argues that homosexuals
are no different from heterosexuals (we
know that because psychologists tell us
so), and that since many priests are in
fact homosexual, the church ought not
to punish someone who is open and
honest about it. The key distinction is
between being an *admitted* homosexual
and being a *practicing* one, since in
ordaining an open homosexual the
church took no position on homosexu-
ality. "We did not intend a test case,"
he writes. "We were not thereby com-
menting on the homosexual life style.
The issue before us had been homo-
sexual *orientation*, not practice." Here
the bishop plays medieval scholastic—
and is unconvincing to the point of
absurdity.

Like President Carter, the bishop is
absolutely humorless, especially where
the object of humor is himself. He
writes:

*I fantasized columns by Art Buch-
wald and Russell Baker, and car-
toons in The New Yorker. People
outside the church would laugh.
The one thing I cannot stand is the
Church being an object of ridicule.
Far better that we be an object of
anger.*

In some ways, this is the most reveal-
ing statement in the book. Of course he
prefers anger. The fact is, the bishop
loves anger, because of the importance
and status that anger implies. But
laughter is quite intolerable. An awful
pretentiousness is exhibited in this
book. It is impossible to feel anger

toward Bishop Moore; one can only
feel pity for the spiritual homelessness
and pathos he manifests.

FUNDAMENTALIST and liberal
styles are of course opposite.
Fundamentalists pretend to all
knowledge, and impose it on
everyone. Liberals pretend to almost
none—except a conviction that tra-
ditional values are pernicious. Funda-
mentalists seem indifferent to the ap-
proval of nonbelievers, content to as-
sert the requirements of faith. Liberals
—Bishop Moore and the World Coun-
cil of Churches are archetypes—pursue
trends and betray a deep need for ap-
proval and acceptance, and an even
deeper sense of inadequacy.

But substantive similarities over-
come stylistic differences. While liber-
als like Bishop Moore seem to enjoy
an openness and tolerance that funda-
mentalists lack, they do so only in the
sense that openness and tolerance are
qualities also enjoyed by est graduates.
In fact, Bishop Moore is deeply close-
minded and intolerant; at one point he
compares those skeptical of homosexu-
ality to Hitler. Both fundamentalists
and liberals exhibit a passion for im-
posing their orthodoxies, an inclina-
tion that is closely allied with publiciz-
ing personal virtue and other forms of
religious ostentation. Their rhetorical
styles communicate an unctuousness
that is melodramatic and embarrassing.

These two books reveal the reasons
for the decline of traditional religion—
both the older forms and the frenzied,
modern attempts to arrest decline. The
older forms are dying, it is true; but
religious progressives only accelerate
the decline, because in their own way
they are just as insufferable and au-
thoritarian as the fundamentalists.

Among all religious virtues—and in
all religious traditions—humility is the
most essential to spiritual vitality. And
while it may be no accident that so
many "religious" people exhibit ex-
tremes of ego and pride, the betrayal
such qualities imply explains, I think,
the discomfort and resentment people
feel in reaction. It is noteworthy that
much of the current interest in religion
is directed toward the East—where
there is no special requirement that the
soul be displayed in all its purity for
public admiration. □

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Nine Bloomsberries

by Frances Taliaferro

Bloomsbury: A House of Lions, by Leon Edel. 283 pages, illustrated. Lipincott, \$12.95.

WE SHALL SOON be able to know Virginia Woolf better than we can know almost any other person of this century," writes Nigel Nicolson in his introduction to Volume Four of the *Letters*.^{*} So voluminous are the "Lupine studies" of the past fifteen years that Quentin Bell refers to the phenomenon as a growth industry. In a recent *New Yorker* cartoon by James Stevenson, we look through the window of the "Virginia Woolf Bookshop" to see customers browsing in sections devoted to Novels, Journals, Husband, Circle, Letters, Biographies, Criticism. The shelves are full and the shop has a prosperous air. Indeed, readers who have kept up with even the bare essentials of Woolfiana may feel that they know Virginia more thoroughly than they know some members of their own families. When has my brother written to me as often or as frankly as Virginia did to Vita Sackville-West or Ethel Smyth? When have you had access to the diary your grandfather kept in cipher at the time of your grandmother's madness? Thanks to the persistence of scholarship, the very chops on Virginia's dinner plate are numbered.

The common reader may react to this abundance in various ways. The elation of discovery comes first, along

with gratitude that these noble works are being undertaken in our time. As volume succeeds volume, however, a weary sense of responsibility for finishing the diaries, letters, and memoirs has yielded in some readers to a peevish satiety, a desire never to see another scrap of writing headed "Monks House" or hear another reference to Hyde Park Gate. Perhaps these feelings are familiar in some degree to those who have followed Boswell's journals or Byron's letters as they have appeared. But readers of Virginia Woolf are faced with an even more prolific regularity of publication, and for some it is tempting to resign in despair.

Now Leon Edel has redressed the balance of Bloomsbury, and the common reader can take heart. Deep in the midst of composing his five masterly volumes on Henry James, Edel thought longingly of writing about Bloomsbury: "nine characters in search of an author." Bloomsbury studies were at that time less dauntingly abundant than they are now, but Edel could still respond to Lytton Strachey's vision of the biographer who "will row out over that great ocean of material, and lower down into it, here and there, a little bucket, which will bring up to the light of day some characteristic specimen, from those far depths, to be examined with a careful curiosity." The attraction of such a method, for the biographer of the exhausting James, was in its requirements of "brevity, lucidity, selective detail and, above all, a light ironic touch." Edel has altered his original plan for a collection of bio-

graphical essays on *Eminent Bloomsburians*, but the attractive qualities

THE PRESENT BOOK, *Bloomsbury: A House of Lions*, is a marvel. In its simplest it resembles those novels that follow the fortunes of a group of people from nonage to maturity, chronicling their passions, consummations, and obstacles. To use this novelistic format at the same time heed the scrupulousness of the historian was Edel's "deliciously amusing task." The nine characters in any case a novelist's dream, for their intrinsic interest but also the complexity of their relationships with each other. Their androgynous quality—in Edel's words, their "sarabatic love"—could supply enough material to satisfy Iris Murdoch. The supporting cast is enormous and the settings easily lend themselves to the novel of manners; as the characters free themselves from the "tribal bonds" of Victorian life and establish themselves in communes east of Tottenham Road, the unfolding of the plot is irresistible.

Edel has restored to general circulation several characters somewhat forgotten in the recent concentration on the Woolfs and Lytton Strachey. The most endearing of these friends is Desmond MacCarthy, one of the contagiously nice people ever to be found in literature and criticism (His pen name was "Affable H"). On any given day, places were reserved for the beloved Desmond at luncheon all over London; he would light up one that happened to be closed at lunchtime. Edel calls Desmond

^{*}*The Letters of Virginia Woolf: Volume Four, 1929-1931*, edited by Nigel Nicolson and Joanne Trautmann. 425 pages. Published in March by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; \$14.95.

Frances Taliaferro writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Jeffrey Burke.

ersational minstrel," a hedonist, and brilliant improviser, a keen actor for whom reality was never naked, always "surrounded by invisible verbal leafiness." Another highly attractive Bloomsbury character was the painter Duncan Grant. Lytton Strachey, Maynard Keynes and Vanessa Bell, he was gypsy, a "natural" but not a primitive Bohemian of all the "How bad pure conversation is morally," he said, shattering one of the most remaining icons of Bloomsbury: the portrait of Duncan is as a words can make it, but readers begin to love him will want to see Richard Shone's excellent book *Portrait of a Painter*, which reproduces his paintings and interior decorations by Duncan, Vanessa Bell, and Lytton Strachey and discusses Bloomsbury's contribution to the visual arts.) Forster (whom Edel excludes from the Bloomsbury canon) expressed in his novels some of the animating spirit of the Cambridge spirit that pervaded Old Bloomsbury. "Only the one we know best, along with the Forsterian insistence on 'the importance of personal relationships.' A book of *Lions* mines these relationships for their psychological power: the power of parents to serve as their children's paradigms of life and love; the power of friends and lovers to dupe the incestuous attraction of the sisters, or to gratify them by controlling and manipulating them. Virginia Woolf provided the title and his epigraph in a letter to Gordon Square [where many Bloomsbury friends lived] is like nothing so much as the lions [sic] house at the zoo goes from cage to cage. All animals are dangerous, rather suspicious of each other, and full of fascination and mystery." As Edel points out, there is more to this image than the "pawing and mauling of the splendid beasts; there is the presence of that instinctive which becomes Edel's true sub-

THEIR WORLDLY POWER was real enough. It influenced not only the literature and the arts but also the politics and economics. Their paranoid contemporaries viewed them as a cartel without whose

cooperation there was no access to intellectual markets. To their detractors they were a snobbish clique, an incestuous little cabal, "a special and malevolent power-seeking group, naughty in its attitudes toward sex, anarchistic in its view of life."

They somewhat disingenuously resisted being described as a Group at the same time that they fondled the nuances of their friendship. Certainly they were hated for their real or imagined association: singly or in a gang, they had the power to cloud men's minds. In 1915 D. H. Lawrence reacted so violently that he wrote to David Garnett, "You must leave these friends, these beetles. . . . When I saw Keynes that morning in Cambridge it was one of the crises of my life. It sent me mad with misery and hostility and rage." Lawrence, of course, had troubles of his own, but perhaps we may trust Roy Campbell's epigram "Home Thoughts in Bloomsbury":

*Of all the clever people
round me here
I most delight in Me—
Mine is the only voice I hear,
And mine the only face I see.*

Time will test the durability of their eminence, but I suspect that their interest as a group will prevail even after the last bit of documentation has found its way into print. The fascination will not be in their check stubs and laundry lists—even if these are eventually annotated and published—but in the intimacy these scholarly mysteries confer on us. Of course we read the Bloomsberries because their work is valuable and because they were significant human beings at a cardinal time in the world's history, but we also read them because in reading them we hobnob with them. Now you and I know that if we were magically transported to Gordon Square or the Mill House, Tidmarsh, none of them would give us the time of day—except perhaps the accessible Desmond, who would be delighted to postpone the awful moment when he must meet his next deadline. Never mind. As readers we call them by their first names; we are privy to their secrets of bedchamber and kitchen. We may not share the friendship of any elite in our own drab lives, but we are given the freedom of the Bloomsbury circle. We are its surrogate members. □

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HIDING FROM THE BOMB—AGAIN

(Continued from page 40) CRP should proceed in order to reduce the possibility of America's being coerced in a time of crisis. In September, President Carter signed a secret Presidential Directive (PD-41) accepting that conclusion. Soon after, the news broke that Carter had approved a new \$2 billion civil-defense program. The figure was based on Defense Department estimates of what it would cost over a seven-year period to develop effective crisis relocation plans and continue to fund other civil-defense activities at the current rate of about \$100 million a year. The directive Carter signed had contained no dollar figure.

In a period of austerity, the reports of \$2 billion for civil defense were an embarrassment. At a November 30 press conference, Carter called the reports "completely erroneous." Several weeks later, a Defense Department proposal to ask Congress for \$145 million for civil defense in fiscal 1980 (up from \$98 million in 1979) was cut back to \$108.6 million.

So CRP proceeds, but it proceeds slowly, its future not yet assured. "My budget is increased in this extreme austerity year," Tirana said in February. "Why? I assume because I need to begin carrying out the President's policy directive. ... But, to make CRP effective, we must spend \$230 million a year over the next five years, with additional expenses in the sixth and seventh years...."

"The bottom-line question is: Do you want to spend \$2 billion to make sure the Russians don't walk out of Moscow?"

CHRIST ALMIGHTY!" Lt. Robert Hogan said. "It took me twenty-five minutes to get through the Brooklyn-Battery Tunnel this morning because there was a little snafu." Hogan, who wears a three-piece suit and a gun, is deputy director of New York City's Office of Civil Preparedness. He administers all civil-defense activities on a day-to-day basis. He has "grave reservations" about the feasibility of plans to evacuate New York.

"We don't waste our time worrying too much about nuclear protection," Hogan said in an interview at his office in police headquarters. "What we do is work on emergencies that strike large metropolitan areas. Now we're in an intense kind of study of how events in Iran may affect city services, how the gasoline crisis will affect emergency vehicles.... The smallest part of our work has to do with nuclear attack."

He gestured toward the city out his window. "We still have those goddamn shelters out there, and we're trying to get rid of them. DCPA came out with an advisory about three years ago that a sampling of the shelter crackers showed they'd reached a state of rancidity that would cause mild dysentery."

He opened a drawer of a filing cabinet and showed me a large can of fallout-shelter biscuits. It was next to a bag of red fallout-shelter hard candy. Hogan took a piece of the candy

and gave me one. It was edible but had a stale off-taste.

"The sugar preserves them," Hogan said, "but not the crackers. It's easy for a small community, with a few shelters, to get Boy Scouts to come and carry them out. But we had 8,000 shelters stocked in the early Sixties with biscuits, medical kits, water barrels, and sanitation kits. The medical kits had some phenobarbital. That was de-stocked by the city in the early Seventies, or de-stocked by looters. But people still call and say, 'I have all this civil-defense stuff. How do I get rid of it?' The city put out a bid for a destocker and one person answered. An upstate farmer got the contract. He'll pay one dollar a ton for the biscuits and use them for pig feed."

Hogan's office is a successor to the once-independent Office of Civil Defense, which employed 300 people at its peak. It is long gone now, but other reminders of its efforts still remain.

"We have 800 sirens," Hogan said. "They're activated by telephone lines. We have to pay \$6,000 a month to keep those lines. I've proposed disconnecting the whole system.... A Russian submarine forty miles off New York can lob missiles at New York City that from launch to detonation will take seven seconds. In that time, the military command has to discern the attack at its headquarters in Colorado, and then notify Albany, and they notify us, and we have to notify fifty-six precincts to turn on the sirens, and the people who hear them will run into buildings and will be turned to sand in a few seconds anyway."

On the subject of CRP, which has not yet begun for New York City, Hogan said he will be polite. "We're going to give them full and active cooperation—within the bounds of reality." Then he told a story of how a Labor Day-weekend truck accident on the New England Thruway near Co-op City stopped traffic all through Manhattan and as far away as the New Jersey Turnpike.

"A lot of people have doubts about evacuating the New York metropolitan area," acknowledged state civil-defense planner Herskowitz, whose Albany staff went to work on the Plattsburgh evacuation plan before all others, in part because it is the easiest. "I have doubts about New York," he said, "but, mechanically, I think it can be done. New York City evacuates a few million people every day after work. At least in theory, you can do it."

A preliminary study of evacuating New York done for the DCPA last year concluded that 11.33 million people in the metropolitan area could be evacuated in 3.3 days, using cars, trucks, buses, trains, planes, and boats. In a detailed breakdown of how this could be done, the study specified, for example, that 75,000 residents of Manhattan would travel up the Hudson River to Saratoga County on three round trips of five Staten Island ferries. Meanwhile, 300,000 people would take trains from Hoboken to Cayuga County; 614,600 people in The Bronx would drive north on I-87 to Ulster County; 43,000 residents of Queens would fly

to Bradford, Pennsylvania. And so on.

To keep in touch with specific small evacuees as they travel, the study addressed them over the radio by a list of their Zip codes, license-plate numbers, and dates of birth. Thus: "Group 10 start driving out of town at 4 A.M."

Hogan had not seen the study until it to him. He said he didn't think it would work.

"I know New York civil defense," Herskowitz said, "but I think they're open to it than they were before." He said, the New York City plan is in a preliminary stage. "We've had some meetings with civil-defense people and some executives in possible host counties."

And how did they react to the prospect of hundreds of thousands of city residents, including many minority-group members, in their midst?

"We're getting at least tacit approval from them," he said. "They're all Americans."

(Such good will has not always prevailed. In 1961 a Las Vegas civil-defense official was organizing a 5,000-man militia against the possibility of wartime refugees from the South arriving in Nevada "like a swarm of locusts.")

The final New York City plan, he said, "will take years, unless they throw money into it. We're spending two million on Plattsburgh, and I've only got four."

If that money comes through, the New York plan may someday be as official as Tucson's, which was shown to me by a Tucson official as a model. It specifies not only that Tucson residents will travel to their evacuation sites but also where they will stay when there. In Nogales, the plan says, 200 Tucsonians will live at the Kino Cleaners, Arroyo Boulevard. They will eat at McDonalds at 205 Crawford Street, and if there are breaks out and bombs fall, they will be evacuated to the Kino Cleaners by 342 of the 530 people who live at Elks Lodge #1397, because Kino Cleaners is more easily converted into a fallout shelter (by packing dirt around it) than the Elks Lodge.

A few days after seeing that plan, I called the telephone Kino Cleaners. It took several minutes to track down, because it had been closed for a while. A True Value Hardware Store, I was told, owned Ed Baez on the line. I told him I was planning to house 200 refugees in his store. "Oh?" he said. "That's news to me. I explained more or less."

"Jiminy Christmas!" he exclaimed. "They could live here. It wouldn't be comfortable. They'd have to stand in the johns. There's only two."

I told him that 542 people would be housed after a nuclear attack.

"No way!" he said. "They'd be walking around thinking whoever's designing the plan has no sense. They'd have much thought to large concentrations of people. Maybe we'd just go across the border into Mexico. We've got lots of hills here. That's where I'd go."

HARPERS ART

A TALE OF SPIN

by David Suter

The British mathematician G. H. Hardy liked people who had "spin." His biographer, C. P. Snow, notes that "spin"

is a cricket term, and untranslatable: it implies a certain obliquity or irony of approach: of recent public figures, MacMillan and Kennedy would get high marks for spin, Churchill and Eisenhower not.

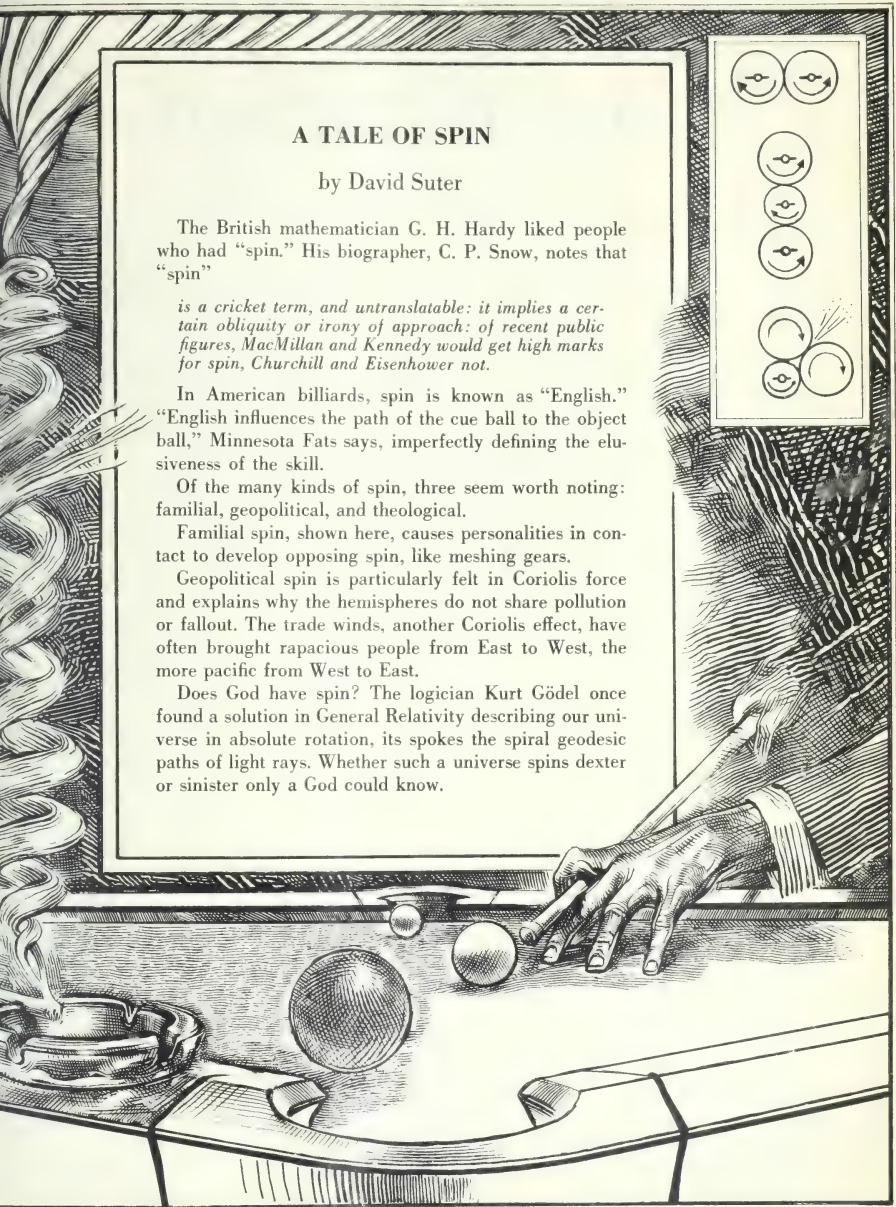
In American billiards, spin is known as "English." "English influences the path of the cue ball to the object ball," Minnesota Fats says, imperfectly defining the elusiveness of the skill.

Of the many kinds of spin, three seem worth noting: familial, geopolitical, and theological.

Familial spin, shown here, causes personalities in contact to develop opposing spin, like meshing gears.

Geopolitical spin is particularly felt in Coriolis force and explains why the hemispheres do not share pollution or fallout. The trade winds, another Coriolis effect, have often brought rapacious people from East to West, the more pacific from West to East.

Does God have spin? The logician Kurt Gödel once found a solution in General Relativity describing our universe in absolute rotation, its spokes the spiral geodesic paths of light rays. Whether such a universe spins dexter or sinister only a God could know.



MATTERS OF TASTE

The candy man

by Alexander Theroux

I BELIEVE there are few things that show as much variety—that there is so much of—as American candy. The national profusion of mints and munch, pops and drops, creamfills, cracknels, and chocolate crunch recapitulates the good and plenty of the Higher Who.

Candy has its connoisseurs and critics both. To some, for instance, it's a subject of endless fascination—those for whom a root-beer lozenge can taste like a glass of Shakespeare's "brown October" and for whom little pilgrims made of maple sugar can look like Thracian gold—and to others, of course, it's merely a wilderness of abominations. You can sample one piece with a glossoepiglottic gurgle of joy or chew down another empty as shade. thin as fraud.

In a matter where tastes touch to such extremes one is compelled to seek through survey what in the inquiry might yield, if not conclusions sociologically diagnostic, then at least a simple truth or two. Which are the best candies? Which are the worst? And why? A sense of fun can feed on queer candy, and there will be no end of argument, needless to say. But, essentially, it's all in the *taste*.

THE TRASH CANDIES—a little lobby, all by itself, of the American Dental Association—we can dismiss right away: candy cigarettes, peanut brittle, peppermint lentils, Life Savers (white only), Necco Wafers (black especially), Christmas candy in general, gumballs, and above all that glaucous excuse for tuck called ribbon candy, which little kids, for some reason, pounce on like

a duck on a June bug. I would put in this category all rock candy, general Woolworthiana, and all those little nerks, cupcake sparkles, and decorative sugars like silver buckshot that, though inedible, are actually eaten by the young and indiscriminate, whose teeth turn eerie almost on contact.

In the category of the most abominable tasting, the winner—on both an aesthetic and a gustatory level—must surely be the inscribed Valentine candy heart ("Be Mine," "Hot Stuff," "Love Ya," et cetera). In high competition, no doubt, are bubble-gum cigars, candy corn, marshmallow chicks (bunnies, pumpkins, et cetera), Wacky Wafers (eight absurd-tasting coins in as many flavors), Blow Pops—an owl's pellet of gum inside a choco-pop!—Canada Mints, which taste like petrified Egyptian lime, and, last but not least, those unmasticable beige near-candy peanuts that, insipid as rubber erasers, not only have no bite—the things just give up—but elicit an indescribable antitaste that is best put somewhere between stale marshmallow and dry wall. Every one of these candies, sweating right now in a glass case

at your corner store, is to me proof positive of original sin. If not to be available, I suggest, only for the become favorites of certain innate fatties at the Food and Drug Administration who must buy them by the bag. But a bat could hardly couldn't be a chum of ours, I chuckled.

Now, there are certain snobs, of course, who can distinguish candy from wine, by rare deduction: distillate, vineyard, growth. They are the wrappers, can tell twinkle in the tartness in an instant, and of sniffing nothing more than the cardboard sled of a good candy can summon up the scent of the Moluccas. It is an art, or a skill, or a *tending* to art. I won't boast that I am, but allow me, if you will, to confess of the fact of it. The connoisseur, let it be said, has no special access. Candy can be found everywhere: airport lounge, the drugstore, the PX, the student union, the house, the company vending machine—old slugs, staler than natto, sliding down into a tray—but the connoisseur, of course, is the corner store.

The old-fashioned candy store, located on a corner in the American consciousness, is almost obsolete. Its proprietor is always named Sam, and for some reason he's always Jewish. He wears a hat and an apron, he stands around on spongy shoes, still peddling down products from the top shelf, one of those antique metal grinders, and always keeps the lights of the counter at the temperance of a black man.

Alexander Theroux is the author of *Wogs*, a trilogy of novellas, and *Snickup's Cloak*, an illustrated farce. Harper & Row will publish this



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makes his best customers. Little kids with faces like midway balloons, show him their nickels before they order. But he keeps the fullest glass case of penny candy in the city—spiced baby gums, malted-milk balls, fruit slices, candy fish, aniseed balls, candy pebbles, jelly beans, raspberry stars, bull's-eyes, boiled sweets, the lot. The hit's pretty basic. You point, he scoops a dollop into a little white bag, weighs it, subtracts two, and then asks, "Wot else?"

A bright rack nearby holds the bars, brickbats, brand names. Your habit's never fixed when you care about candy. You tend to look for new bars, recent mints, odd issues. The log genre, you know, is relatively successful: Bolsters, Butterfingers, Clark Bars, Baby Ruths, O. Henrys, and the Zagnut with its sweet razor blades. Although they've dwindled in size, like the dollar that buys fewer and fewer of them, all have a lushness of weight and good nap and nacre, a chewiness, a thewiness, with tastes in suitable *contre coup* to the bite. You pity their distant cousins, the airy and unmemorable Kit-Kats, Choc-o-lites, Caravels, and Paydays, johnny-come-latelies with shallow souls and Rice Krispie hearts that taste like budgie food. A submember of American candy, the peanut group, is strong—crunch is often the kiss in a candy romance—and you might favorably settle on several: Snickers, Go Aheads, Mr. Goodbars, Reese's Peanut Butter Cups (of negligible crunch, however), the Crispy, the Crunch, the Munch—a nice trilogy of onomatopoeia—and

even the friendly little Creeper, a peanut-butter-filled tortoise great for the one-bite dispatch: Pleep!

Vices, naturally, coexist with virtues. The coconut category, for instance—Mounds, Almond Joys, Waleecos, and their ilk—is toothsome, but can often be tasted in flakes at the folds and rim of your mouth days later. The licorice group, Nibs, Licorice Rolls, Twizzlers, Switzer Twists, and various whips and shoelaces, often smoky to congestion, usually leave a nice smack in the aftertaste. The jawbreaker may last a long time, yes—but who wants it to? Tootsie Pop Drops, Charms, Punch, Starburst Fruit Chews (sic!), base-born products of base beds, are harder than affliction and better used for checker pieces or musket flints or supports to justify a listing bureau.

There are certain candies, however—counter, original, spare, strange—that are gems in both the bite and the taste, not the usual grim marriage of magnesium stearate to lactic acid, but rare confections at democratic prices. Like lesser breeds raising pluperfect cain with the teeth, these are somehow always forgiven; any such list must include: Mary Janes, Tootsie Rolls, Sky Bars, Squirrels, Mint Juleps, the wondrous B-B Bats (a hobbit-sized banana taffy pop still to be had for 3¢), and other unforgettable knops and knurls like turtles, chocolate bark, peanut clusters, burnt peanuts, and those genius-inspired pink pillows with the peanut-butter surprise inside for which we're all so grateful. There's an *intelligence* here that's difficult to explain, a sincerity at the essence of each, where solid line plays against stipple and a truth function is solved always to one's understanding and always—*O altitudo!*—to one's taste.

CANDY is sold over the counter, won in raffles, awarded on quiz shows, flogged door to door, shipped wholesale in boxes, thrown out at ethnic festivals, and incessantly hawked on television commercials by magic merry-men—clownish pied-pipers in cap-and-bells—who inspirit thousands of kids to come hopping and hurling after them, singing all the way to Cavityville. Why do we eat it? Who gets us started eating it? What sexual or social or semantic preferences are indicated by which

pieces? The human palate—perhaps by Nature herself in like slippery elm, spruce gum frass, and various berries—craves mess almost everywhere, so much so, in fact, that the flavor of candy connotes American breathers, throat discs, mouthwash, fluoride treatments, toothpaste syrup, breakfast cereals, and tal floss, fruit salts, and glazes. Candy—whether boxed, bottled, bowed—that we say hello, good-bye, and I'm sorry. There are regimens, candies that seem at home in one place and weirdly forbidding in others (you don't eat it at the park, for instance, but on the way there), and of course seasonal Christmas tiffin. Valentine's Day mints, Thanksgiving mixes, the diverse quiddities of Easter: chicks, milk-chocolate rabbits, those monstrosities roc-like twined with piping on the outside, filled with a huge blob of neoprene galvaslab! Tastes change, grow fixed. Your aunt likes milk-ladies prefer jars of crystallized Rednecks wolf Bolsters, troll lollipops, college girls opt for in-tins. Truck drivers love Gobstoppers around the teeth, the cents crave sticky sweets, the better, and of course great fat boys, their complexions aflame with pimples and acne, aren't fussy, gorge down a couple of dollars' worth of Milky Ways, \$100,000 Bats, forty-eleven liquid cherries at

The novelty factor can't be overestimated. The wrapper often means candy for you; so capitalism. Hollywood brain, has devised candies in a hundred shapes and sizes—no, I'm not thinking of the actively simple Bit-O-Honey, but lugs on waxed paper, or Little wax tonic bottles filled with disgustingly sweet liquid, or even the Peppermint units that, upon being torn, dispense one of the most evocative cacochymicals on earth. But the paper—a trash candy—is argued to be deemed by inventiveness of the wrapper. But here I'm talking about *per se* *curiosa*—the real hype! Flying saucers, for example, a little plasticine with candy twinkles inside! E. L. Candy Pens, a goofy fountain pen cartridged with tiny pills that tingle the canvatex! Razzles ("First It's a



a Gum")! Bottle Caps ("The Candy")! Candy Rings, a cement-tasting beads strung up a fake watch, the dial of be eaten as a final emetic. dy on a String, blurred on s effective for throat irritation-appears in *Henry IV* men-therapeutic value." You be-gh?

en there's the pop group: s, an umbrella-shaped sugar a stick; Whistle Pops ("The with the Built-in Whistle"); Pops, cherry- or watermelon-ems on a plastic stick—you jewel. So popular are the fiz- the trifling Pixie Stix with red sugar to be lapped out of the Lik-M-Aid Fun Dip, an-it-yourself stick-licker, and ion candies like Space Dust, Rocks, and Pop Rocks that e merchants have to keep e counter to prevent them eting nobbled. Still, these to the experience of eating old jimmies (or sprinkles or shot, depending on where h, which although generally for, and ancillary to, ice n be deliciously munched by for a real reward. With jim- enter a new category all its M's, for example: you don't you mump them.

mumping candies might be ies, hostia almonds, bridge nt peanuts, and pectin jelly eloids in general lend them to the mump.) I don't think and Raisinets—dull separate-orth anything unless both d into the pocket, commin- mumped by the handful at s. (The clicking sound they arely one of the few pleasures.) This is a family that can de Pom Poms, Junior Mints, s, Boston Baked Beans, Six-ndy-coated chocolate-flavored a nice flourish, that), and pointingly banal Jujubes—inds me. There are certain ujubes for instance, that one o embarrassed to name out ing one to point through the e and simply grunt), and among these must certainly reils, Jujyfruits, Horehound and Goldenberg's Peanut ou know what I mean. "Give

me a *mrmrglpxph* bar." And you point. Interesting, right?

I NTERESTING. The very word is like a bell that tolls me back to more trenchant observations. Take the Sugar Daddy—it curls up like an elf-shoe after a manly bite and upon being sucked could actually be used for flypaper. (The same might be said for the gummier but more exquisite Bonomo's Turkish Taffy.) The Heath bar—interesting again—a knobby little placket that can be drawn down half-clenched teeth with a slucking sound for an instant chocolate rush, whereupon you're left with a lovely ingot of toffee as a sweet surprise. The



flaccid Charleston Chew, warm, paradoxically becomes a proud phallus when cold. (Isn't there a metaphysics in the making here?) Who, until now, has ever given these candies the kind of credit they deserve?

I have my complaints, however, and many of them cross categories. M&M's, for instance, click beautifully but never perspire—it's like eating bits of chrysoprase or sea shingle, you know? Tic Tacs, as well: brittle as gravel and brainless. And while Good 'n' Plenty's are worthy enough mumpers, that little worm of licorice inside somehow puts me off. There is, further, a tactile aspect in candy to be considered. Milk Duds are too nobby and ungeometrical, Junior Mints too relentlessly exact, whereas Reese's Peanut Butter Cups, with their deep-dish delicacy, fascinate me specifically for the strict ribbing around the sides. And then color. The

inside of the vapid Three Musketeers bar is the color of wormwood. White bark? Leprosy. Penuche? Death. And then of Hot Tamales, Atom Bombs, cinnamon hearts, and red hots?—swift, slow, sweet, sour, a-dazzle, dim, okay, but personally I think it a matter of brevity that *heat* should have nothing at all to do with candy.

And then Chunkies—tragically, too big for one bite, too little for two. Tootsie Pops are always twiddling off the stick. The damnable tab never works on Hershey Kisses, and it takes a month and two days to open one; even the famous Hershey bar, mad-deningly overscored, can never be opened without breaking the bar, and prying is always required to open the ridiculously overglued outer wrapper. (The one with almonds—why?—always slides right out!) And then there are those candies that always promise more than they ever give—the Marathon bar for length, cotton candy for beauty: neither tastes as good as it looks, as no kipper ever tastes as good as it smells; disappointment leads to resentment, and biases form. Jujyfruits—a viscous disaster that is harder than the magnificent British wine-gum (the single greatest candy on earth)—stick in the teeth like tar and have ruined more movies for me than Burt Reynolds, which is frankly going some. And finally Chuckles, father of those respectively descending little clones—spearmint leaves, orange slices, and gum drops—always taste better if dipped in ice water before eating, a want that otherwise keeps sending you to a water fountain for haunts that never seem to end.

You may reasonably charge me, in conclusion, with an insensibility for mistreating a particular kind of candy that you, for one reason or another, cherish, or bear me ill will for passing over another without paying it due acknowledgment. But here it's clearly a question of taste, with reasoning generally subjective. Who, after all, can really explain how tastes develop? Where preferences begin? That they exist is sufficient, and fact, I suppose, becomes its own significance. Which leads me to believe that what Dr. Johnson said of Roman Catholics might less stupidly be said of candies: "In every thing in which they differ from us, they are wrong." □

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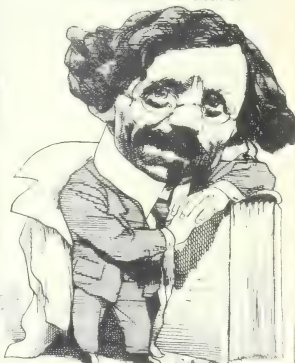
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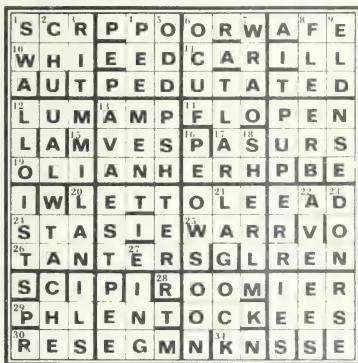


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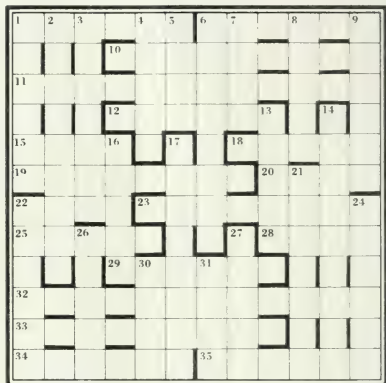
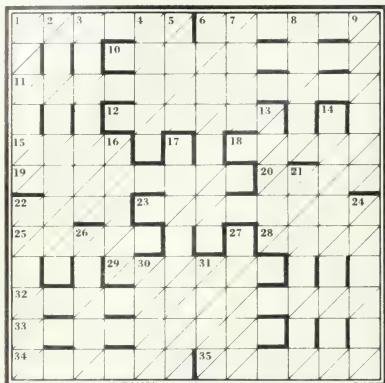
to the July Puzzle
r "Crazy Quilt"

l. s(c.r)eed; 10. W-hippo-or-will; 11. e(a-R)afe; 12. lumped, two meanings; utated, anagram; 14. f(L)ours; 15. manhole, anagram; 17. asp-E-n; 19. O-lives; head, anagram; 24. stateroom, anagram; 25. warren, two meanings; 26. tansies, 28. rockier, two meanings; 29. p(h-leg)m; 30. re-sent; 31. K-nees, reversal. swallowtails, pun; 2. chum(m)iest, anagram; 3. ritualists, anagram; 4. peep anagram of "posh" in reversal of "sweep"; 5. odd(men)t; 6. (J)ocular; 7. wra (n)-pup; 8. fl(e-N-S)e, anagram; 9. el-derb(err)ries; 13. avalanche, anagram; ing, pun; 18. she-t-lock; 21. la-goon; 22. a-verse; 23. don(t)-ees, reversal; ee.

PUZZLE

THE UNCROSSWORD PUZZLE

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr. (with acknowledgements to Ploutos of *The Listener*)



This month's instructions:

Crossword would be a misnomer for this puzzle, because at no point does the answer to an Across clue "cross" with the answer to a Down clue. Instead, in each square, solvers are invited to take their pick of crossing letters in order to construct one perfectly normal crossword puzzle, which is this month's solution. (It's a little mind-boggling, so use the first diagram for work and the second for the final puzzle.)

All words in the final puzzle are common ones; they include a girl's name (27D), a mountain (7D), and a nationality (4D). Clue answers include four proper names. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 99.

CLUES

ACROSS

1. Toddy I mixed is an unusual thing (6)
6. Hundred consumed by fright—it's rare (6)
10. English queen enters appeals for food factories (9)
11. Gets rid of outrageously extreme saint (12)
12. It's real. It's also real with false start (6)
15. German agreement to infiltrate to chop down Greek hero (4)
18. Bird dog sheds bee (5)
19. They talk straight; they use a plane (8)
20. Crow right in the grip (4)
22. Greek characters in lederhosen (4)
23. Gads about town with four stricken ladies' men (8)

25. Representative jealousy about nothing (5)
28. Son embracing daughter's person (4)
29. Intimates no right to be devils (6)
32. Writing in ten parts for weaving (12)
33. Without time, bum bit queer piece of charcoal (5)
34. English painter and woodworker (6)
35. Provides food concealed in crates (6)

DOWN

1. One and one add up for hostility (6)
2. Indians and lions seem untamed (9)
3. Congressman beginning recapitulation (7)
4. With heart filled with love, one's thrown for loop (4)
5. Flow like a fountain from August Heckscher, (4)
6. All New York does things for getting into one's ment (4, 4)
7. English school's letters from simpleton (4)
8. More bare and under-developed? (5)
9. Making stops at sea, the Spanish put into inlets (5)
13. Inhuman kind of needlework, by the sound of it (5)
14. Moved idly east under new way (9)
16. King sweeps for laughs (5)
17. Slim lady deteriorated sadly (8)
21. Derision could make me rocky (7)
22. Goal kick (6)
24. Dumber Poles taking in bucks? Just the opposi (5)
26. "The Royal Family" died in disastrous tour (5)
27. Operatic chorus housed in Roman villa (5)
30. First-class crowns (4)
31. Increase sound beams (4)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to The Uncrossword Puzzle, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by August 13. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscrip-

tion to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the September issue. Winners' names will be printed in the October issue. The June puzzle, "Light Switches," are Waino W. Tulsa, Oklahoma; Michelle Hutkin Horowitz, Falls Church, Virginia; and Cherniavsky, Columbia, Maryland.



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Harper's

THE MONEY VANISHES

the case of Bert Lance and the overdrawn accounts

by L.J. Davis



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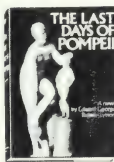
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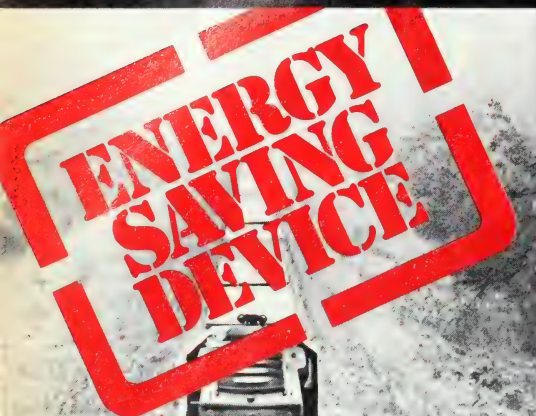
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LETTERS

The republic

Walter Karp's "Republican Virtues" [July] is provocative, but adds nothing to foreign-policy considerations. He avoids the dilemma posed by the desirability of supporting other republics as an effective and necessary means of defending our republic from outside interference. In fact, he casually avoids serious consideration of the problem of external threats to the republic. If we can define the virtues by which a republic is known, why should we not then form defense pacts with any geographically defined adherents to these virtues? And when are these virtues manifest in an evolving society? At what point do we recognize a new republic? And finally, are or should all republics be one republic?

ROBERT J. CHITESTER
Erie, Pa.

WALTER KARP REPLIES:

I thought I added one point to "foreign-policy considerations"; the fundamental principle that republican self-government is best served by a modest foreign policy, as modest, needless to say, as a difficult and often threatening world permits. The principle is not always easy to apply in practice, but those leaders who call for an active foreign policy because it "disciplines" the citizenry are not trying to apply that principle in a difficult world. They are quite deliberately standing it on its head. I thought I made that point, too.

Blessings

Thank you for the lovely article "All the Pope's Men," by Cullen Murphy [June]. In this age of the cult of the person, it is heartening to see a magazine provide a centerpiece for so lov-

ing an account of the scholars' of devotion to something greater themselves, something not even perceived by the rampaging hedonists and materialists that prevail today.

DAVID
Blue Hill, Mass.

Living to be young

"Whom the gods love die young." In his informed, wise, and compassionate essay, "Living to be [July], Ronald Blythe quotes an apothem and accepts its usual meaning, that to die young is "a divine favor." To develop this paradoxical appealing idea would have been to his purpose. Still less would I propose another understanding, there is a variant, both plausible and important. So I suggest it, with the intent of extending Mr. Blythe's remark not of quarreling with them.

I believe, as others have before, that those whom the gods love die young when they die, whatever years. You have seen them; at 60 or ninety they are fresh, busy, useful, intelligent. Without effort they joy their rare spirit, and without descension they bestow it on others. Think of some of the great conductors, composers, instrumental performers who keep their youth into old age: at least in their public appearances, Piatagorsky, Pierre Monteux, Horowitz, Rubenstein, Stravinsky, Copland, Myra Hess, Wanda Landowska, Bruno Walter, Toscanini. We these musicians keep their youth in health. Because they live the hard life they give to others. Because the love them.

You do not have to stay with the young to see what I am describing, with prominent people. You find

young among "all sorts and conditions of men," even among those tied to wheelchairs, plugged with catheters, tortured by pain.

Can one earn the love of the gods, which expresses itself so graciously? Possible and unimportant. Like the gift itself, it is a gift. Deserving of these chosen people receive it. Live according to its gentle discipline, and it is to the majority of us, who are less fortunate. We stay younger through their youthful presence.

W. R. LEWIS
Iowa City, Iowa

Beggars thy neighbor

In another refreshing article by J. R. Brimelow ["Hapless Canada," July] was discredited by an incorrect and inaccurate remark regarding high protection and the obsolescence of the Canadian textile industry.

First, Canadian tariffs are lower than those in the United States. Second, the textile industry, although concentrated in Quebec, is

spread across other areas of Canada as well. Third, I do not know Mr. Brimelow's qualifications for stating that the industry is obsolete, but if he wishes he can get solid and rational rebuttal from the members of the Canadian Textile Institute.

J. R. STANFORD
President
West Coast Woollen Mills, Ltd.
Vancouver, B.C.

LET BRIMELOW REPLY:

I am grateful for Mr. Stanford's kindness, but his remarks on the protection of the Canadian textile industry do illustrate its unfortunate consequences. The United States does impose higher tariffs on some textile items than Canada, although Canada's mix of imports is such that its domestic industry is better shielded. However, the United States is well protected against the common foe, imports from the Orient. Nonetheless, the Asian goods are so much cheaper that Canadians have had to impose direct physical restrictions on the volume of imports as well. The Canadian Textile

Institute notwithstanding, much of the Canadian plant is fairly old, but even efficient operations, of which I am sure Mr. Stanford's is one, just do not have the fundamental economic advantages of the Orientals', although the effect of protection is to obscure this unpleasant reality. The concentration of the industry in Quebec, incidentally, is probably more than 75 percent.

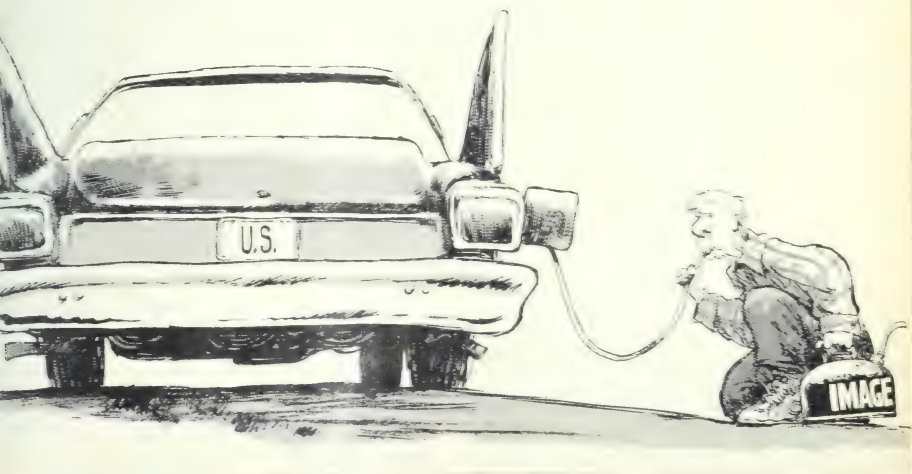
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Jack Richardson ["Life on the Card," July] will be glad to learn that the Yankee instinct for saving a cent and letting the dollar take care of itself, is still extant. Nearly all of the retail outlets I have dealt with recently, given the choice of three credit cards or my personal check backed by a guaranteed check card, chose the check every time—a neat method of using the card's credit information without paying the fee for it.

GERTRUDE V. MARTINEZ
Fort Collins, Colo.

HARDEN'S SEPTEMBER 1979

W. R. LEWIS



BLIND MAN'S BLUFF

The lost sight of the imagination

by Lewis H. Lapham

AT A POLITICAL BANQUET early last summer in New York, I found myself seated next to a publisher who took pleasure in his prosperity, his idealism, and his invitations to momentous events. His publishing house brought forth several hundred titles a year, and among these the literary critics could be relied upon to discover six or seven "masterpieces" in both the fall and spring seasons. When not engaged in making movie deals, the publisher sometimes went to Moscow to promote the cause of justice and freedom, sitting at night among dissident poets with whom he discussed human and subsidiary rights. The banquet's guest of honor had been delayed in Washington, and as a way of passing the time the publisher invited me to study the faces of the fifty or sixty people arranged in tiers on the dais. All of them were prominent in the social, intellectual, political, or financial affairs of the city, and with respect to maybe twenty of them the publisher had acquired enough information over a period of years to appreciate both the magnitude and the humor of their pretensions. He observed that B——, who had been introduced to partisan applause as "the voice of reason and conscience," had made a mistress of his son's wife and that his debts had most recently been paid by the operator of a massage parlor. N——, upon whom it was said the solvency of the city depended, had

a talent for theft and sodomy. The publisher pointed out four gentlemen sitting gravely behind American flags, all of whom he said should have been prosecuted for criminal fraud; he indicated several others who routinely used their cultural or religious offices to provide patronage for their homosexual lovers.

The publisher offered these observations in a spirit of hospitable pride, as if he were handing around a box of Havana cigars. He had found set before him a spectacle of treachery and greed, and it pleased him to display the refinements of a connoisseur. When he had come to the end of his tale I asked him why so few American novelists took the trouble to portray the society of which the ladies and gentlemen on the dais were so fairly representative.

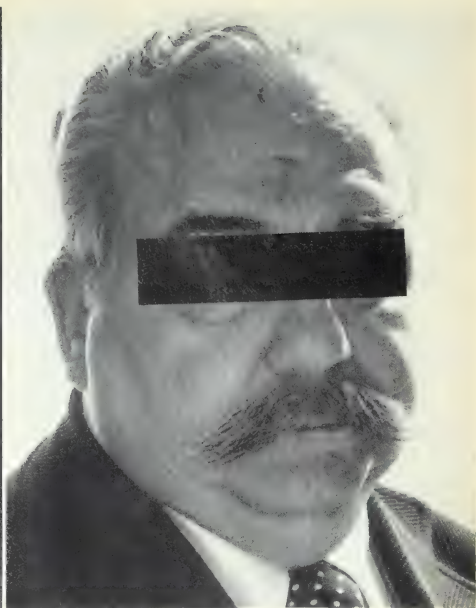
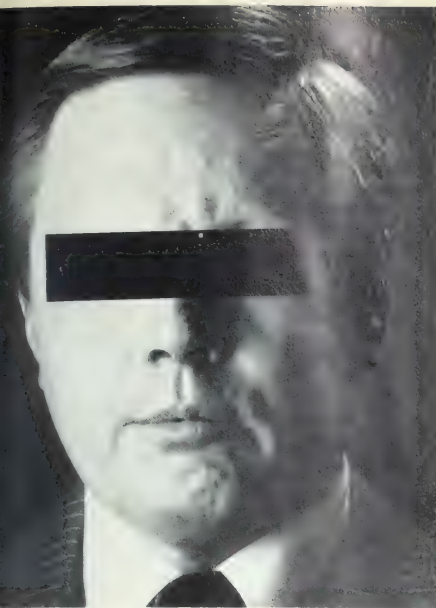
"Ah, but that would never do," the publisher said, bestowing on me a conspiratorial smile. "It would unsettle people too much, and the books wouldn't sell. Even the Marxist English professors like to think of themselves in safe hands."

We didn't have the chance to pursue the conversation because the guest of honor arrived in a sudden blossoming of television lights, and he began to speak almost at once about the evils of thermonuclear war and the pressing need to ratify (or maybe it was the pressing need to reject) the SALT II treaty with the Soviet Union. It was a long and earnest speech, remarkable

chiefly for the ingenuity of the speakers, writers who had placed the argument in so artful a setting of brilliant truths. The guest of honor apparently hadn't had the time to study the way in from the airport. He blundered over the acronyms and confused the names of weapons systems, but I listened to him say what he had to say (no doubt with the best of intentions for the good of the country and the safety of mankind) and thought about what the publisher said and about the Alexandrian of the second century B.C. who wrote poems about fishes in the shops. The poor fellows had lost the courage to see, and so they had the choice but to conceal their blindness with the masks of decorous abstraction. The Washington politician was much the same thing, and so were the writers to whom the publisher paid large sums for political fairy tales for the macramé of sexual freedom knotted together by the writers of the universities. It is impossible to feel sympathy for the writers of the statesmen worn down by the weight of the past.

The Alexandrian poets could recite lines of Homer and Sophocles, and the inevitable comparison with their works and days must have inspired them a feeling of self-disgust. So the anxious cabinet officials who ran out the business of state in rooms furnished with the portraits of Jefferson or Lincoln. The calm face of de-

Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.



One of these men had a business that went into a slump, into the red and up in smoke.

He had a fire of a "suspicious" nature, but arson could not be proved. So, he was able to collect a substantial amount on his insurance. He turned his business into a profit for himself but into an additional expense for the insurance company and the policyholders.

Arson has become the "hottest" crime in the nation. Who are these arsonists? They range from small, one-time offenders, like the man on the left, to organized professional "torches." Many have found arson a profitable enterprise. Shocking! Even more shocking are the losses related to arson—700 lives and an estimated \$1.6 billion in red fire losses in 1977. When you consider lost jobs, property taxes and higher costs in consumer goods, the economic loss is a staggering \$10 billion!

We're a major group of property and casualty insurance companies and we're alarmed by the rise in this vicious and dangerous crime. Not only does arson jeopardize lives and property, it costs policyholders a lot of money—approximately 40¢ of every claim dollar paid for fire losses. That's four times more than ten years ago.

Recently, the FBI re-classified arson as a major crime, in the same category as murder, rape and grand larceny. This re-classification will result in greater attention from federal, state and local law enforcement agencies. We

in the insurance industry urged the government to take this action. We will continue working with law enforcement agencies to stop the spread of this vicious crime.

Here's what we're doing:

- Trying to take the profit out of arson by more extensive investigation of claims and by cooperating in the prosecution of more persons involved in "suspicious" fires.
- Supporting the Insurance Crime Prevention Institute's investigations of insurance fraud.
- Conducting arson-detection seminars for insurance personnel.
- Developing the Property Insurance Loss Register—a computerized file of previous loss claims which will alert investigators.
- Encouraging state legislators to pass stricter laws that carry heavier punishments for arson.
- Encouraging community and state arson task force programs to deal with arson problems on a local level.

Here's what you can do:

- Report any suspicious persons or activity to the police, fire department or fire marshal.
- Support efforts in your community to fight arson.

This message is presented by the **American Insurance Association**, 85 John Street, New York, N.Y. 10038.

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treasures smiles down from the walls, and meanwhile, thirty miles off the coast of Norfolk, Virginia, the nuclear submarines (either our own or somebody else's) glide serenely to and fro, bearing in their holds the fire of the atom. The more frightened people become, the more they must console themselves with statistics and memorandums, with interminable debates and novels of ever-increasing bulk and celebrity. It occurred to me that the newspapers the next morning would take very seriously the speech to which I was listening and that the prominent columnists in the country would excuse the speaker's ignorance in the interest of national security. If the world can stand in fire, then it is intolerable to think that the fire can be brought down from Heaven or Colorado by men as nondescript as President Carter, President Brezhnev, or Cyrus Vance. Surely they must be divine, or at least heroes comparable to those who went forth with Odysseus to Troy, and so the literary as well as the political press does that it can to provide the trappings of significance. To suggest that we live in a world without statesmen or novelists of stature constitutes an act of political atheism. The world has become much too dangerous a place to suffer the government or the wisdom of fools. Thus the universities produce criticism and criticism, and the journalists paint posters. Even if they were inclined to inquire into the sexual and psychological character of the officials from whom they solicit statements on "the issues," the laws of libel, or their worries about gossip not being sufficiently dignified, restrain them from the task of the imagination. I understood that the publisher had meant, and why one of the leading American novelists, and certainly none of the so-called investigative journalists, could describe a company on the dais with any degree of verisimilitude. Under the rules of modernism the novelists can avoid to close a knowledge of the specific individuals whom, once having been inflated into abstractions, they prefer to look upon as shamans, ogres, or giants. In addition to their crimes, the ladies and gentlemen on the dais presumably had committed useful or noble acts, but the modern writer finds it all but impossible to confront the paradoxical nature of human conduct and desire. The world shifts under his

feet; the abyss looms at all points of the compass. If the present trends continue, in a few years I expect John Gardner to write a novel in the shape of a troll, and Cyrus Vance to give a speech distributed to the press on pieces of paper cut into the shape of a cruise missile.

HOW AND WHY the United States lost a picture of itself I have no way of knowing; I am not enough of a historian to place the moment in time (possibly in the 1960s, possibly as early as 1948) at which both the literature and the politics of the country lost the sight of the moral imagination. It has become commonplace to describe the United States as a helpless or pitiful giant, an image that usually brings to mind the figure of Gulliver tied to the ground by Lilliputian bureaucrats who weave the strands of government regulation. I think instead of Polyphemus, blind and wandering, casting huge stones at Nobody in the invisible sea.

Among merchants and politicians, even among scientists, the absence of insight is a fearful thing, but it can be accepted as a necessary condition for conducting the business of the marketplace, the laboratory, or the state. Henry Kissinger repeatedly has said that before becoming Secretary of State he knew nothing of economics and that once installed in office he never had the time to think. He relied on the system of ideas he had brought with him to Washington, and within that field of thought he responded as best he could to the occasions and rumors of war. Innumerable scientists have made analogous confessions, usually within a few months of a medical or technological catastrophe. They appear before a Congressional committee to say that they know far less than they have been reputed to know. The world, they say, is made of many mysteries, and the honorable Senators should look upon them not as magicians, but rather as humble monks and scribes, confined within surprisingly narrow cells of knowledge, as if bent over the calligraphy of illuminated manuscripts.

The novelist can escape easily enough to Princeton or Martha's Vineyard, but unfortunately he leaves the novel behind. If he takes as his task the il-

lumination of human conduct, then I don't see how this can be done (at least not to any socially redeeming purpose) at so great a remove from the arenas in which that conduct weighs most heavily on the course of political events. Although I can be interested in the drama of self-annihilation and despair among professors of classical literature, I find that the same drama played out among undersecretaries of defense carries with it a degree of intensity that allows for the possibility of art. The writer's task always has been extraordinarily difficult and it has not been made easier by the discoveries of Einstein, Heisenberg, Hitler, and Freud. In the nineteenth century, Dickens or Balzac could believe that other people were fundamentally unknowable. So also could Dostoevsky, although Dostoevsky extended the boundaries of what was both knowable and permissible to limits undreamed of in the philosophy of Samuel Pickwick or Vautrin. Proust measured the immense spaces between people, and Joyce explored the unfathomable reaches of the drifting consciousness.

For the past thirty or forty years the modern American writers have been intimidated (unduly, as it now turns out) by the wonders of the sciences. The explosions at Hiroshima and Nagasaki made an impression even on the most dull-witted sophists in the schools. No wonder the writers of the present generation make such exaggerated claims for themselves. The less people feel certain of their place in the scheme of things, the more loudly they insist upon their relevance and self-importance. This was true of Louis XVI in the first years of the French Revolution (foolishly antagonizing the Parisian mob with royalist plots), and it has been true for the literary intellectuals of the twentieth century. Joyce went so far as to suggest that his readers devote their lives to the study of his novels, a claim that would have seemed preposterous to Shakespeare but entirely plausible to William Styron.

Confronted with what they perceived to be the totalitarian state of modern science, a good many writers went into exile, fleeing across the border to the universities, taking with them what they could salvage of their childhood memory and their patents of sensibility. Numerous other writers tried to imitate the scientific methodologies,

constructing jargons in the manner of those PolyneSIans in the great South Sea who worship the broken machinery that washes up on the beach. But the scientific technique (no matter how thoroughly indexed) fails to replace the lost sight of the imagination. They lower their instruments into the depths, and they get back nothing more than a few ambiguous readings from the floor of the sea. Their systems analysis cannot account for the German officers who sent the cattle trains to Auschwitz and yet, being in many other ways exemplary husbands and fathers, would have dismissed an adjutant for committing the indiscretion of adultery.

Nor can they account for the behavior of the hierophants on the dais, who although they wouldn't dream of shouting at a waiter, find it inconvenient to think too much about the people dying in the cellars of Spanish Harlem. The child selling heroin on 135th Street contributes his tithe to the New York real estate market, but as the publisher had pointed out, it would be thought "depressing" and "unrealistic" to discover how and why his payment supported the public official so gifted at sodomy and theft.

The strangeness of the world remains as baffling and remote as the depths of the oceans, but lately I have noticed that even the most self-assured of the scientists (the ones who promise "break-throughs" in return for a grant of \$150 million) have begun to concede that their hypotheses float like corks above an abyss. If science doesn't know, and if the country is no longer rich enough to afford all the mistakes, then it is conceivable that the writers might regain a sense of their usefulness. The loss of courage follows from the failure of the imagination, or maybe it is the other way around; if a man cannot see even a few feet into the mist, then it is hard for him to bear his fear, and it is impossible for him to display the sense of humor characteristic of American writing prior to the age of empire.

FEWER THAN 100 generations separate the Ayatollah Khomeini from the Persian campaigns of Alexander the Great, a period so brief in the evolution of the human mind that it can hardly be measured on the scale of biological

time. In the first nine months of its life the child in the womb makes a journey of 500 million years. Why then should anybody be surprised if the old darkness still clouds the mind of man? Alexander had been educated by Aristotle and raised by his father to a vision of political unity. But his mother was insane, haunted by serpents and Oriental religion, and from her the boy inherited a belief in magic. As a young man, brilliant in the arts of war, Alexander conquered the known world. Soon afterward his mind gave way to luxury and barbarism, and he proclaimed himself the child of an Egyptian god. He destroyed Tyre and Thebes, but he built no roads, promulgated no idea of education or order, provided for no line of succession. In all his coming and going across the plains of Asia, as aimless as the coming and going of Yasir Arafat, he left behind him little more than the tombs and coins that adorned the legend of his vanity and cruel magnificence.

If man still finds himself struggling

with his ancient enemies of vanity, superstition, envy, and greed, he has nothing to put in the field against them except the capacity to see, however dimly, both the nature and the consequences of those acts that he would prefer to hide from himself. We are likely to die as ignorant as we began, advancing from one bewilderment to another, surrounded by the fertile darkness from which we draw the shreds of light. The mistake is to pretend to know too much, to speak, as do the hierophants on the dais, as if we were privy counselors of deity. The Greek gods did not demand correct opinions, explained nothing about the origin or destination of the universe, authorized no scripture, conferred no divine rights on kings or priests, and generally behaved in a manner unbecoming to an absolute. Odysseus knew that the universe was no prefabricated thing, but that it created and re-created itself in much the same way that a man makes and remakes his own destiny. □

HARPER'S/SEPTEMBER 1979



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Why has American economic performance slipped?

Essentially, we seem to have lost sight of what truly drives our economy and what is required to keep our products and services competitive in world markets. Worse, our vision of the future appears to have narrowed to include only that which is politically fashionable and expedient for the short-term.

It is politically fashionable, for example, to charge that company profits are too high... are a "windfall"

...or are even "obscene." Yet profits constitute the key support for expanding company facilities, financing new research and development, replacing outmoded and inefficient equipment and, ultimately, ensuring greater productivity, higher wages and more jobs.

It's also politically fashionable to demand greater governmental "safeguards," i.e. regulations on the activities of companies. Yet, each year, government regulations cost our society — both companies and individuals — about \$100 billion. Much of which could be used instead for new plants, for new products, for new research, for new technology and to create new jobs. All of which would make us more competitive in world markets.

It's politically expedient for government — in the interest of "protecting the general welfare" — to spend billions of taxpayer dollars on over-regulation without fully weighing costs against benefits. Government overspending, and the resulting federal budget deficit, remains a primary cause of our nation's most serious problem, inflation.

Clearly, we must, as a nation, restore our vision and, with it, our productive capacity.

In the months ahead, we at Chase intend to speak out on the "productive capacity" question: on inflation, on profits, on government regulation, on business investment, on research and development.

Our reason for doing so is quite straightforward. If, as a nation, we are unable to revitalize our productive capacity, Chase's shareholders, customers and employees — together with millions of other Americans — will pay the price. It's a price we need not, and should not, have to pay.

So, we will speak out — as loudly and clearly as we can. We'll do it in our own self interest. And, we believe, in yours.



OF TWO MINDS ABOUT ABORTION

Bringing mixed motives to bed

by Andrew Hacker

IF OPPONENTS of abortion had their way, 1.3 million more babies would be born this year, for that is how many pregnancies are being artificially ended. If supporters of abortion had their way, there would be one million fewer births this year, for that is how many additional abortions could be performed were resources fully available.

Abortion has become the hardy perennial of our politics. It is a controversy with a life of its own, demanding a place on the public agenda no matter what other questions plague us. Of course there have been similar issues before, but none—not even Prohibition—has stirred so much soul-searching or ambiguity of feeling.

Not the least cause of confusion is that at those most passionately embroiled in the struggle have defined the terms of the debate. Thus we are asked to accept "Right to Life" and "Freedom of Choice" as the chief opposing principles. These slogans have been heard so often they need no rehearsing. ("A woman has the right to control her

own body." "But not at the price of another life.") Yet being caught in a crossfire can help to clear the mind. One might wonder if more is at stake than either side will admit. As it happens, that suspicion is correct.

In fact, abortion conceals a basic social conflict, but one we are not prepared to discuss. The subject, of course, is sexual intercourse. But not in terms of attitudes or abstractions. At issue, rather, is the importance sexual pleasure is granted in our lives. For a growing number of Americans, full and frequent sexual activity is a vital source of enjoyment. Others see this development as endangering moral character and the survival of society. It is only in such a context that arguments over abortion become clear.

For this reason, it should be added that abortion is not the province of any single religion. Though the majority of opponents are indeed Roman Catholic, many Protestants and Jews join in the outcry, and women of every religious background have availed themselves of abortions. Catholic tenets may

be congruent with "the right to life," but the anti-abortion movement has less to do with doctrinal scruples than with the sensibility of a class and a generation.

OF THE 5 million pregnancies that occurred last year, 3.3 million resulted in live births. 1.3 million ended with abortions, and the remaining 400,000 were miscarriages or stillbirths. Supporters of abortion not only defend the 1.3 million terminations but would push the percentage higher. A recent study released by the Alan Guttmacher Institute—the main statistical source in this area—estimates that almost 600,000 women who wanted abortions last year were unable to obtain them because their region either lacked facilities or set onerous restrictions.

Some supporters go further. They claim that with suitable counseling many women now disposed to bearing

Andrew Hacker teaches political science at Queens College in New York City.



their babies would come to change their minds. Even with abortion available, each year almost 250,000 teenage women have out-of-wedlock births. Unintended pregnancies precipitate many marriages. More than 300,000 teenage brides are pregnant at their weddings. Those who favor abortion feel more can and should be done to convince these women that having their babies would be a mistake. And were this goal attained, the number of abortions in the United States would match the number of annual births. Japan has already struck that balance. The Soviet Union even tips it on the side of abortion.

Of course, it is difficult to imagine a person who is literally "pro-abortion." It is still a surgical procedure, requiring professional attention. Hence those who support abortion as an option speak of it as a last resort. Birth control, they say, is best. Abortion should be a recourse if contraception fails, or was never used at all.

Yet if this recourse has become increasingly necessary, the reasons are not always the ones we hear. By and large, youth, poverty, ignorance are cited as the causes of unplanned pregnancies. While these are obviously part of the explanation, statistics suggest other provocations as well.

Two-thirds of all abortions are performed on women over the age of twenty. Many are well-informed, middle-class persons, quite familiar with contraceptive methods. Nor is unreliable equipment often the cause. A significant reason women become unwittingly pregnant is that even the best-educated bring mixed motives to bed.

Ambiguous feelings about conceiving come with the condition of being a woman. To want and not want a baby at one and the same time is an emotion most women have experienced or certainly understand. Hence the high incidence of women reporting to their doctors that they had simply "forgotten" to take a pill or put a diaphragm in place, or had been certain that the "safe period" before ovulation had another day or so to run. Thus far, researchers have avoided this subject, which is probably just as well. We are dealing with sentiments even women themselves find it difficult to articulate. To call such behavior illogical, as men are apt to do, shows a failure of sympathy and imagination.

Intercourse is not an act in which one is always in control or certain of one's intent. Repeated insistence on women's right to control their own bodies may itself be evidence of the ambivalence that attends surrender to sexual pleasure, aside from the public and political content of this phrase.

A woman can toy with the idea of becoming pregnant, without wishing to see the pregnancy through to term. This is especially so with younger women, curious about their capacities. Not only "Can I do it?" but "What will be its effect on me?" are things every woman wonders. No matter what else she does with her life—she can head a huge corporation—having achieved conception is still part of being a woman. And once that state has been attained, even if only for a fortnight, she may reconsider where it will lead. Or tell herself having a baby is fine; now is just not the time.

There are other forces at work. Women tend more than men to link intercourse with romance. The more one plans precautions, the less sublime it seems. Among women who do not have a steady sexual partner, few use the pill on a regular basis or wear an intrauterine device. Such ongoing protection is still relatively rare, even in our liberated age. Even today, most women still like to believe that intercourse requires the man's initiative. Not being prepared helps affirm that posture and adds to the spontaneity. It is only after a month or so has passed that the consequences must be faced.

There are instances where women obtain abortions to punish the father, their parents, themselves. But here I find myself intruding on territory I have no right or wish to enter. For whatever reason, it is nonetheless a fact that many "unwanted" pregnancies were either desired in a halfhearted way or resulted from knowingly taking chances. Such conceptions are as common among worldly women as among ingenuous girls in their teens.

THE STRUGGLE to legalize abortion was conducted in the name of married women. The typical plaintiff ("Mrs. Roe") already had more children than the family budget could support. If allowed this one abortion, she would

presumably ensure that it wouldn't happen again.

However, the chief clients for abortion have not been Mrs. Roe. Only one in six abortions is performed on women over thirty. And fewer than one in twelve is performed on mothers with more than three children. Fully 75 percent of all abortions are performed on unmarried women. A third of these women are still in their teens, and another third in their early twenties. In other words, the rising demand for abortion has attended the spread of youthful sexual activity. In fact, episodes of premarital intercourse were more common in the past than people admitted. What has changed is that once young people are initiated, they persist, usually with a steady partner.

A Guttmacher Institute survey of unmarried teenagers revealed that fewer than one in five of those deemed "sexually active" made consistent use of contraceptives. Fewer than half had protected themselves the last time they had intercourse, and only half of those used certifiably reliable methods. Moreover, some young women make pregnancy their goal. It is seen as a way of entering adulthood, of relieving an aimless life, of restoring self-esteem. Still, most teenagers are not equipped to be parents, and they have second thoughts when confronted with that fact of life. If they are not to be driven to abortion—as 400,000 annually are—then something must be done. But what?

Perhaps the most commonly heard solution is sex education in the schools. Supporters of abortion invariably invoke such programs in any remarks they make. The only problem is that "sex education" has become a vague and evasive symbol. Few who employ it have any idea what actually happens in the classroom, nor are they disposed to find out. Better to assume that experts know how to handle the niceties, as happens in driver training.

In fact, even the most liberal school districts allow little serious discussion of birth control. Teachers may mention various methods, but the descriptions are fairly summary. Not one school in a thousand will permit a diaphragm to be passed around, let alone give lessons on how to unroll a condom. On a purely verbal level it can be said that some teenagers acquire "information." It is at the next step,

TWO MINDS ABOUT ABORTION

Where information becomes instruction and practice, that the schools abdicate. While boys can buy condoms at a drugstore, it is a rare mid-teen girl who will approach a gynecologist on her own. Birth-control services are increasingly available, especially on college campuses. The problem is reaching those who start sexual activity in their sophomore year of high school. That passes for sex education will not prevent premarital pregnancies until schools shepherd groups of pupils over to nearby clinics, with or without parental permission. Even progressive-minded parents draw the line at such proposals. The idea persists that equipping an adolescent can only encourage promiscuity. Once armored, she will indulge in indiscriminate sex with an endless array of partners. This fear may be universal, but it runs especially deep among parents of teenage daughters. They prefer to hope their children will use good sense about sex, whatever that may mean.

What emerges is that for young people abortion is not a "last resort" at all. Rather, it is the first intervention in adult society. We are told it must be available lest hundreds of thousands of young women be hobbled by ear-motherhood. Due to our chariness about sex education, we are asked to accept a quick, surgical remedy rather than face our own misgivings about providing preventive measures. It is only after a teenager has had an abortion that we feel we can give her the equipment she clearly needed earlier. At this point it should be admitted that abortion has become a major mode of birth control. And it will continue to be one until adults resolve their own dilemmas about teenage sexual experience.

WITH THE ADVENT of the abortion debate, a new word has entered common usage. While people always knew what "fetus" meant, it is not a term heard much in public. It belonged to biological science, denoting animals in gestation. But now we hear it all the time, at least among advocates of abortion. What is removed from a woman's womb is invariably called a "fetus." Or occasionally an embryo. Or even a fertilized egg. But never, of course, a baby.

The reasons, while hardly mysterious, deserve explicit discussion. Those who have had abortions are rarely unburdened of guilt. Even active lobbyists have lingering feelings that their advocacy is wrong. (The mention that someone has had, say, three abortions causes some discomfort, even in sophisticated circles.) Sometimes this guilt is labeled "ungrounded," an irrational emotion to be alleviated by therapy. Yet regard for human life is considered a test of civilization. These doubts have not been resolved, nor are they likely to be. Rather they are screened from immediate consciousness by calling whatever it is a "fetus." This is clearly a blindered solution, if it is any solution at all.

"Fetus" has another, more practical, use. It denotes something disposable, akin to an animal embryo discarded after a laboratory experiment. Here a "fetus" is construed as a growth within oneself, one of several inconveniences that can arise from sexual activity. And like those other annoyances, it has a prescribed mode of treatment.

Support for abortion comes primarily from men and women who admit to enjoying sexual activity and want safeguards for that pleasure. They have attained new realms of experience, which they have no wish to abandon. Apart from a small minority, they are not swingers or spouse-swappers or even necessarily unfaithful. They compose a new class of Americans, for whom intercourse is an important leisure pursuit. But it is also an activity that needs abortion as a backup.

And what of the babies who are aborted? Even fervent supporters of abortion cannot claim to know which particular children would be better off unborn. Only in rare instances do we say of certain persons—those who have suffered greatly or inflicted suffering on others—that it would have been preferable for everyone had they never lived at all. One knows of babies who were initially unwanted, yet brought joy to their parents' lives. There are infants who came perilously close to abortion, but went on to lives of real distinction. This is too tangled a subject for dispassionate analysis. Those who favor abortion prefer to avoid the issue by focusing on how a birth may affect the mother. Opponents resolve the dilemma by demanding that everyone be born.

OPponents of abortion base their case on principle, which allows for no exceptions. An abortion is a planned assault on life, a murder with no extenuating circumstances. Thus far the majority of Americans have not accepted this view. Victims of incest or rape enjoy special sympathy, as do women certain to deliver babies that will be deformed. For this reason, opponents have settled for restrictions rather than abolition.

Thus one national Right to Life campaign resulted in Congress's adoption of the Hyde Amendment, named for its sponsor, Henry Hyde, an Illinois Representative. Beginning in the summer of 1977, no further Medicaid funds could be spent on abortions unless childbirth risked the mother's life. In the previous year, 295,000 women with low incomes had abortions paid for with federal funds. The Hyde ban has proved all but total. In the twelve-month period following its passage, fewer than 3,000 women qualified for Medicaid abortions.

While individual states can still pay the bills, only nine now do so fully.* Most of the rest accept the Hyde Amendment's limitations. Some go further. Massachusetts, for example, has removed abortion from the health coverage of employees on its payroll and their spouses.

At this writing, figures are not yet available on how many abortions will be blocked by the states' restrictions. Even women able to pay are subject to hardship. Some states now require hospitalization, which easily doubles the cost. Louisiana requires a court order for women under eighteen. It also makes physicians remind potential patients that "the unborn child is a human life," and then offer a graphic description of its "tactile sensitivity." This law, considered a model by abortion opponents, passed the Louisiana legislature by a 123-1 margin. Now a constitutional amendment is pending that would make it a federal crime to end any unborn life.

What makes opponents of abortion insist that every pregnant woman be made to bear her baby? Their own

* As of this writing they are: Alaska, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, and Washington. In several others, restrictive legislation is under court injunctions.



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power is well-known: that child has a right to experience whatever its life may hold in store. This would suggest that opponents care deeply about the children they wish to save. Yet the record offers little concrete evidence that professed concern.

This country has never claimed to offer equal opportunities to all its children. Those with privileged upbringings always stand a better chance than others. Still, with public education and tolerance for talent, it could be argued that the odds allowed most youngsters hope for a decent start in life. However, recent years have seen the emergence of a generation of Americans who seem denied that hope, and destined by a host of disadvantages to live in the shadow of unfulfilled capacities. One of those disadvantages is early pregnancy, which writes a fairly predictable script for both mothers and children. Poor teenage girls who become pregnant generally quit school before they have the basic skills required for steady employment. Close to nine in 10 keep their babies and enter the welfare rolls, where they remain as dependent children are born. Their infants begin with lower birth-weights and greater vulnerability to disease. In turn, the children begin in settings similar to those where they were conceived.

To be sure, no one really knows what degree society's intervention might improve their circumstances. Some very expensive programs (job training, for example) have had minimal effect. Still, there has been success in some cities. One program offers day care for mothers while they finish high school, and day care for their children. Another adds to this counseling with job placement and frequent follow-ups. Needless to say, the high costs needed of staff to constituency make these ventures very costly. Outlays can total five figures for each participant. Perhaps ultimately such services will be paid back, if mothers and their offspring become assets to society, but no one really knows.

What can be shown is that opponents of abortion have been conspicuously silent about services of this kind, particularly those funded by taxes. At best, they will point to a few homes for unwed mothers as a testament to their good will, and to services established to convince unmarried women

that they ought to bear their babies. But as far as abortion opponents are concerned, once a child has been given its life it is on its own.

There is another reason for compelling the birth of a baby. It is a way to punish the mother. Chastening is what she deserves. She has had her hours of pleasure, and should be made to take the consequences, especially if those idylls were illicit. A baby as a burden sets limits on one's life, and one woman's forfeiture of freedom will be an example to others. When moral arguments go unheeded, motherhood remains a final threat.

Certainly, opponents of abortion want to see an end to youthful sexual intimacy. They make no pleas for birth-control instruction or providing contraceptives. Such safeguards will encourage the very acts they hope to halt. The aim is abstinence, at least until a couple has been married. Although these restraints are congruent with Catholic morals, the authority of the church alone does not seem to account for their persuasive power.

Nor is it only teenagers who require this stern attention. Too many older women who should know better are casual about intercourse and seek to avoid its responsibilities. Almost a quarter of all abortions are being performed on women who have had one before. This, plus eagerness for a "morning-after" pill, shows a penchant for pleasure devoid of moral sense. Only if abortion is no longer an option will these women come to realize that bedding down is something to think about twice.

Opponents of abortion see the pursuit of pleasure as contaminating our age. This view echoes a puritan as well as a Catholic heritage, which says enjoyments should be earned. And even those who earn them should take a slender ration. Needless to say, opponents of abortion do not say they are opposed to sexual activity, only that it must be enjoyed in marriage, and best on the sparing side.

People who oppose abortion see themselves as citizens who have paid their dues. They have not only accepted parenthood, but have kept their lusts in check. And they know—even envy—what they have missed. The evidence is all around them, not least on prime-time television. At this point, the tensions take on social contours.

Below them they see the poor, engaging in carefree sex and then getting free abortions. Above them stands a modish middle class, enjoying an array of partners and putting abortions on credit cards. How can one keep one's own children moral with so many examples around to the contrary?

Feminists argue that opposition to abortion reflects hostility to women. Yet it happens that women—especially those married with several children—are abortion's most active adversaries. There is, in fact, a social division among women themselves. On one side are those accustomed to frequent sexual enjoyment; on the other, those unsettled by the notion of such indulgence. Were women alone to vote on abortion, the tally would still be close.

I FEEL I SHOULD END on a personal note. For my own part, I favor making abortion available, on an unrestricted basis. My reasons are those customarily given, and I have no new arguments to add. At the same time, I am far from happy finding myself in this position.

Abortion is a taking of human life. No legal or scientific theorizing can change that basic fact. My fear is that sanctioning abortion will direct our sensibilities from moral principles to pragmatic matters of cost and inconvenience. That aspect of abortion concerns me as much as anything else.

Moreover, I find I have sympathy for those on the other side. Far from being fanatics, they conceive of a social and moral order where citizenship has its duties and passions are held in check. They believe strongly in the family. Theirs may be a stern, even punitive, ethic, but they are people who have contributed their share to society, at no small cost to themselves.

I am not convinced that those supporting abortion have a parallel vision. Theirs is a highly personal outlook, stressing freedom and choice and pleasure. What is lacking is any sign of concern over the society we will have, and the people we will be, once their ends are attained. A fully active sexual life may be fine. But we should consider where it can take us. Opponents of abortion have done just that. Its supporters prefer to avoid such questions. □

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REWRITING THE CONSTITUTION

ce, liberty, and a balanced budget

by Ben Martin

WHO DO YOU like for president of the next constitutional convention—Sam Ervin or Archibald? Take your time deciding, but not take too long; the drive for a convention to require a balanced budget is bearing in on Washington. Officials there are hurrying to avoid it, but a thirty-fourth state could call for a convention within months. Then Congress would have to decide what to do about it, and the stakes could not be higher.

The call for a balanced budget has been raised to draw official Washington's attention finally to taxes, inflation, and a rising sense that government is out of control. It is a summary complaint against the growth of government, reflecting a basic insight that taxing and spending, along with regulation, are the heart of public policy. Steps over piecemeal issues, and the demand for constitutional amendment underscores the seriousness of the complaint.*

The states have petitioned for a balanced budget, but limiting government spending is more nearly the matter. "balanced budget" is a slogan that makes sense in individuals' terms, but at the federal level even higher taxes to balance government spending is the last thing advocates want. Another theme—perhaps more sensible—would tie annual spending to increases

Article V. "The Congress, whenever two thirds of both Houses shall deem it necessary, shall propose Amendments to this Constitution, or, on the Application of the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, shall call a Convention for proposing Amendments, which, in either case, shall be valid to all Intents and Purposes, as Part of this Constitution, when ratified by the Legislatures of three fourths of the several States, or by Conventions in three fourths thereof, as the one or the other Mode of Ratification may be proposed by the Congress."

in the gross national product.

Both ideas are enormously popular. In July, 1978, a Gallup survey found 81 percent polled favoring an amendment requiring a balanced budget, though the figure slipped to 70 percent in an AP/NBC poll last February. And a CBS News/*New York Times* poll last November found 76 percent favoring a cut in spending over a tax cut. Yet people are realistic: 70 percent doubted politicians will work to balance the budget.

Americans still display overwhelming support for the Constitution. At the same time, there is widespread disaffection and a sense of distance from government. The Harris poll found alienation from politics has doubled in a decade. Most believe the American condition is worse now than in the past, and they also feel things will not improve. For the first time, there is personal pessimism as well; a majority now feel that their personal situations will deteriorate in the future, along with the country as a whole. And they pin the blame on Washington. Fewer

have confidence in the central government than in state and local governments, and confidence levels are lower overall for governmental than for private institutions—except for organized labor, which is distrusted as much as the federal government.

The states have applied to Congress hundreds of times before, for a wide range of amendments, but this time Washington is worried. With the steady centralization of power and the emergence of a national press, the vectors of cultural and political innovation seemed clear: elite to mass, Washington to hinterland, figurative center to periphery. But now, out of nowhere—out of state legislatures, of all places—comes this vulgar threat to the American mandarin.

What passes for leadership of the movement comes from something called the National Taxpayers Union, although a Maryland state senator, James Clark, has also been pushing the idea with other state legislators since 1974.

Ben Martin teaches politics at the University of Missouri at Kansas City.



Since the Supreme Court has held that no individual taxpayer has standing to sue Congress over spending from the general treasury, the drive to limit spending constitutionally amounts to a grand, political class-action suit by taxpayers. The convention mode is the closest thing there is in the Constitution to the techniques of popular initiative and referendum, reflecting popular distrust of political establishments.

State legislators calling for a balanced budget are seen in Washington as traitors to the official class, siding with the voters against their big brothers at the national level and making them look bad. Accordingly, the first response in the capital was to threaten to shut off the federal money spigot to the states and localities: you want less spending, goodbye revenue sharing. This has had a sobering effect; state governors are already complaining about punitive blackmail from Washington.

Liberal Democrats generally oppose, in increasing order of ferocity: requiring a balanced budget; doing it by constitutional amendment; and doing that in another constitutional convention. Republicans in Washington also oppose a convention, but favor a balanced budget and are moving toward the method of amendment. The House Republican Policy Committee endorsed both a constitutionally required balanced budget and a limit on federal spending last spring, but party leaders in both chambers oppose another convention.

Jerry Brown of California is trying to ride the west wind by supporting all three, while Jimmy Carter of Washington opposes them. Brown's embrace of Proposition 13 last year assured his reelection as governor, but his support for a constitutional convention has hurt his chances for the Presidential nomination, at least in the party of government subsidy. He has little support among the union leaders, Democratic regulars, and political activists who are more liberal than the rank-and-file but who dominate the party's organization. They have little love for Carter and may pine for Kennedy, but Brown's endorsement of a balanced-budget amendment is considered heresy and may have disqualified him even as stalking horse for Kennedy.

THE NATIONAL PRESS has treated the taxpayers' revolt from the beginning as an outlandish oddity—more dangerously reactionary than stock-car racing, but about as bizarre. It has received only grudging recognition as a genuinely popular trend and still is not designated as a fully respectable movement. Episodic coverage of the drive for another constitutional convention gave way early this year to a rash of press stories pronouncing it “sputtering” and tying it to Jerry Brown, whom the revisionists were then transforming from a serious candidate into a guru on safari. By siding with the taxpaying majority, Brown forfeited his greatest political asset—the willingness of the press to be used—and guaranteed coverage of his shallowness and naked ambition.

President Carter has avoided that mistake, which should aid his re-election but could jeopardize his reelection. He opposes legally requiring a balanced budget, on the advice of Charles Schultze, chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers, who says it would prevent the government from fighting recessions and would be impossible to administer. This reflects the countercyclical economic notion on which fiscal policy supposedly has been set for nearly twenty years, in which deficits during recession years are, in theory, offset by surpluses in boom years to produce steady growth without accumulating deficits. The trouble is that the surpluses in the good years have not been tried. The last small surplus was in 1969, and inflation remains chronic, which allows government the luxury of ever-increasing revenues without the messiness of a tax increase.

Spending is politically profitable; taxing is not. Inflation conveniently pushes taxpayers into higher brackets, even when purchasing power declines, and tax revenues increase automatically. Spending can then rise, illusory “tax cuts” can be made noisily every few years, and government can grow.

In the past twenty-five years, the proportion of the income of the average American family taken in taxes has doubled. Federal, state, and local taxes now take more than a third of the net national product. Where does it all go? Neo-Keynesian theory helps justify government spending to stimulate de-

mand, but it says nothing about who the payers and payees ought to be. Liberal Democratic social theory and constituency interests provide the answer: they should be different people. In the 1970s, for the first time in our history, the primary business of the central government became the transfer of income among individuals. Those in the upper half of adjusted gross incomes (above \$8,931 in 1975) paid ninety-three percent of all the personal income taxes collected by the Internal Revenue Service, while purposeful transfer programs accounted for more than half of all the spending. This has created a growing class of permanent government dependents who see their subsidies as entitlements and who, together with public bureaucrats, provide vital support for the Democratic party.

The calls for a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget are an attempt to check the growth of the share of the national income taken by government. Some think an amendment that limits spending would accomplish that more directly, since taxes could be raised to balance any budget. The National Tax Limitation Committee, led by Milton Friedman, has proposed an amendment to Congress that would limit federal spending hikes to increases in the GNP, with a downward adjustment for inflation that would give politicians an incentive for reducing inflation rather than increasing it, as at present.

In practice, both ideas, balancing budgets and limiting spending, might tend to have the same effects. Taxpayers' complaints would slow the rise in taxes—and therefore spending—a bit if balanced budgets were required; and inflation-swollen taxes would quickly rise enough to balance the budget if spending were limited by law. Both amendments contain escape clauses that would free spending in case of national emergency, but neo-Keynesian economists—and President Carter—still claim they are insufficiently flexible to fight recessions.

Of course, inflexibility is the whole point of these spending limitations. Like locked liquor cabinets, they are intended to prevent larceny and intemperance in those we mistrust. Washington is a conglomerate of subgovernments—coteries of Congressmen and

ir staffs, bureaucrats, and lobbyists concerned with different policy areas. Each of these iron triangles serves itself and its constituents in the short term, and the logrolling among them produces total spending and policy outcomes of unexpected proportions. The three points monitored by party leadership, the Congressional Budget Committees, and the Office of Management and Budget are unable to check the great flow of policy and spending. The proposed amendments to control the budget, are appropriately, determinedly *institutional*, to govern profligate impulses when self-discipline is absent and solution inadequate.

But fiscal 1981 is the year the Congressional Budget Committees are planning a balanced budget, for the first time in more than a decade, though only after another \$23-billion deficit in fiscal 1980, the fruit of Carter's "austerity." They may make it, too, because inflation is pushing tax receipts up so high so fast that the 1981 budget could be balanced with even enough revenue to cover for a tax cut of some \$15 billion.

promise of 1976, but Congressional leaders are also hoping the promise of a balanced budget in just a couple of years will reduce pressure on state legislatures for another constitutional convention. In 1980, it would remain only that—a promise—but that is probably the best the Democrats can do.

President Carter has called the proposal for a second convention "extremely dangerous," citing fears that it might throw out the Bill of Rights and undermine civil liberties, a curious reaction from a candidate who only wanted to make the government as good as the American people. But opponents believe that the American people would not be represented at another convention; it would be dominated by special interests.

If another convention were called, Congress would try to restrict its deliberations to the budget amendment, although most legal scholars doubt the validity of such an attempt. Prof. Charles Black of Yale Law School feels the framers intended the Congressional method for piecemeal amendment and the convention mode only when so many were dissatisfied with their government that a general revision was necessary. All the state applications for a balanced-budget amendment have limited their call specifically to that subject, and some have called for a convention only if Congress fails to initiate such an amendment; but, once gathered, the delegates could argue convincingly that they were entitled to set their own agenda, and such a runaway assembly is the stunning possibility that mesmerizes everyone. At the furthest edge of plausibility, the delegates could propose drastic changes for the Constitution and also try to change the ratification procedure, as the first convention in Philadelphia did in 1787.

Whatever amendments another convention produced, the Congress might claim the right to refuse to submit them to the states. But whatever that outcome, three-fourths of the states must still ratify them to become part of the Constitution, and it is hard to imagine any attempts to avoid that last requirement. This provision, which no one has suggested changing, should assuage any reasonable fears about a wide-open convention, for any amendment that thirty-eight states approved could not be all bad. Nor is ratification likely to

WE SHOULD ADMIT that the first Constitution is moribund. Except for a few institutions—the dominant federal structure is not one of them—the original Constitution is largely irrelevant to contemporary public affairs. It set a framework for government on principles widely shared by Americans in the eighteenth century, still held by the majority today, but long abandoned by our governors.

From the Mayflower Compact through the Articles of Confederation, Americans relied upon written fundamental laws to establish, but just as importantly to limit, government. The Constitution was written to correct the inadequacies of the Articles primarily in defense and foreign affairs, for which the new central government was allowed to finance itself. The commerce and currency clauses were intended to *prevent* state regulation and paper money. The Bill of Rights was intended as a further check on the central government, although it has become a license for central control.

Federalism is obliterated now, of course. State and local governments have become franchisees of Washington, dependent upon revenue carrots and submissive to the stick that inevitably followed. There are few domains left now for which federal action is unprecedented. Central government expansion has been driven through every opening in the first Constitution. The antifederalists were right.

The Constitution's careful separation of powers has been wrecked by the growth of Presidential initiative and Congressional delegation to the bureaucracy. The least accountable arms of central government, bureaucracy and the courts, govern most freely. What began as a Constitution of states' and private rights has been turned into a cornucopia of powers.

Building a collectivist state in this century has required demolition of the classical liberal values of the Constitution. Redistribution and regulation have required progressive assaults on property, and an antibourgeois animus has driven the architects of our new constitutional order. The new premises

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public policy have turned taxpayers' money into "public funding" or "federal spending." Senator Kennedy has criticized the "blank check for all the funding programs contained in the Internal Revenue Code—the tax expenditure programs." Even the money government lets you keep should be regarded as "yours," rather as soon from Washington. Senator Moynihan described Californians voting Proposition 13 as "degrading nationalists."

Today's rebellion is another middle-class reassertion of the legitimacy of inherited order, as was the original revolution. Tax rebels today would agree with the revolutionary aim of John Adams: "I say again that resistance to innovation and the unlimited powers of Parliament, and not any new form of government, was the object of the Revolution."

Most of the values underlying that revolution and the Constitution were found in the thought of John Locke, distinguished between occasional violations of natural law inevitable under any form of government and chronic violations constituting a "long train of abuses, prevarications, and artifices" marking degeneration into tyranny, against which rebellion became a right, even a duty. Liberty was perceived as freedom from alien dictation, freedom from government, and American conditions seemed so neatly confirm Locke's views that they became the bedrock of American political thought.

Americans generally expect and accept social change, but primarily out of politics and not as a sweeping purpose of government. They generally support the Lockean emphasis on private property as crucial to individual liberty, and they value achievement. It is no wonder that mounting redistribution and regulation have vexed today Jefferson's charge against King George III, that "he has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance."

WASHINGTON is mobilizing to avoid another constitutional convention. The Congress has been alternately soothing the states with promises of a balanced budget by 1981

and threatening them with cuts in revenue sharing. Senator Bayh's Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution has been holding hearings on an amendment, and others are on in the House.

President Carter has set up a squad of staff members from the White House and the Office of Management and Budget to pressure governors and legislative leaders in key "battlefront" states not to call for a convention. It is cooperating with a group called the Citizens for the Constitution, brought together by Lt. Gov. Thomas P. O'Neill III of Massachusetts to lobby against a convention, backed in turn by labor unions, civil-rights groups, and public-interest groups.

Congress might try to get by with some general resolution for fiscal responsibility, hoping that will stem the tide. Or it might propose a balanced-budget amendment itself, hoping that thirty-eight states will not ratify it after they realize that balancing is not the same as controlling spending. Nearly the most dangerous move, from liberal Democrats' perspective, would be a Congressional amendment to tie annual spending to increases in the GNP. This makes more sense than a balanced-budget requirement and comes closest to satisfying tax rebels.

Democrats in Congress have resisted efforts to set ground rules of a convention by law. Such a law would set the time, place, delegate-selection, and voting procedures and try to set the issue to be considered.

Delegates would probably be elected in House districts, with seats at large from each state. If the thirty-fourth state applied quickly enough and Congress moved soon enough, Washington politicians might prefer delegate selection at the same time as the 1980 elections, so they could get double duty from their campaign funds and organization. That timing would probably help offset the damage to Democrats if the elections of delegates were on a separate ballot, formally nonpartisan, and decided by the issue.

In any case, the advantages of Washington incumbents in such elections would be so great that Congress might be forced to set the size of the convention at, say, twice that of the Electoral College, instead of just one from each district and two from each state. This would still be an assembly of just under 1,100 and would make it

easier for Ralph Nader, César Chavez, and William Buckley to join the crowd.

Contemporary liberals warn that reactionaries—meaning classic liberals who still like the values of the first Constitution—would dominate a new convention. But it is just as likely that leftist groups already strong enough to have entrenched themselves in Washington would be able to take over a convention as well. Unions, especially, as well as the new class of well-educated professional and managerial specialists who took over the Democratic party in 1972, should do quite well with their organizational and polemical talents. Even if they dominated the convention and enshrined in the Constitution the new politics they have imposed in this century, we would gain a lot just in having the current philosophy of American public affairs set out explicitly. Another convention, with all its possibilities, would force a great shaking-out of American politics. Its drama would cut through the layers of mass apathy and focus popular attention on the fundamental political questions. It would force Americans to consider the kind of people we have become, and the society and government we prefer. It would allow a genuinely New Foundation, if desired.

The proximate issue, controlling government spending, is not some fiscal technicality; it reflects a growing desperation among the governed. The political appeal of the New Deal model—our current constitutional order—has lain in its promise to each voter to take from and control other people for his benefit. But as leveling and legislation have proceeded, a growing majority of Americans have realized that they are now those other people, more often targets of state action than beneficiaries; yet the machinery of regulation and redistribution seems impervious to individual aspiration.

Another convention would force Americans to recall the values of the first Constitution and consider how we have changed as a nation. It would allow a recalculation of the costs of dependence upon government and the benefits of individual responsibility and voluntary public spirit. Another convention could offer perhaps a last chance to make sure we have the government we deserve. □

A PROPER EDUCATION

The trade-off between method and motive

by Leon Botstein

ORTEGA Y GASSET, in his *Mission of the University* (1944), cited the qualities of serious university reform: the main thrust should not be merely to correct abuses; the reform of colleges and universities—of education—should reach beyond the confines of educational institutions and respond to the problems and needs of a culture and nation.

The reforms of the 1930s satisfied Ortega's specifications. Both John Dewey and Robert M. Hutchins, who inspired and led the reforms of those years, forged their ideas out of a vision of what democracy could be. Faced with the Depression, fascism, and Communism, they sought to mold active citizens who would lead American democracy from corruption and ineffectiveness, give it a moral and ethical foundation, and deliver on the promises of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Hutchins especially wanted to do more than correct abuses in the universities when he took on specialists who lacked values and social elites with degrees but without the common education crucial for intelligent participation in the political process. Hutchins believed he had a set of keys to the castle of a

new America of reason and justice: a vision of essential liberal learning.

Consider the contrast the current debate offers. Almost all the new curriculum initiatives, whether at Amherst, Harvard, Stanford, Illinois Central, or Gustavus Adolphus College, are directed only at so-called educational abuses and bypass fundamental issues. Accusatory in tone, they are falsely nostalgic and demand little substantial change. They blame education for having lost its way and students for being what they are: illiterate, ignorant, and ill-prepared, with little sense of history or cultural tradition. We're told that no one seems interested in learning for learning's sake, for culture, for knowledge. The university has become merely the instrument by which our youth, including future academics, get tickets to their careers. Where has the human side gone, the whole person?

What accounts for today's sudden demand that the liberal arts be used to provide knowledge for knowledge's sake? I believe that the liberal arts are now being used as a slogan to shield more serious social and cultural issues from being addressed by the university. Who can argue with a call

for literacy and learning, for the resurgence of culture and the nurturing of the civilized individual? Unfortunately, liberal education in its current definition—learning for its own sake, or "abstractions," to quote John C. Sawhill in the pages of this magazine—has come to be defined as a powerless adjunct to the real acts of living: eating, working, sleeping, sharing one's life with others. The opposite ought to be the case. A sanitized version of history, the humanities, art, and science has emerged, based on the notion that the liberal arts are essentially disinterested, free of ideology, merely a technique of thinking rather than the substance of thought or the carrier of values. This notion was developed in imitation of science, of the idea that science and real knowledge must be objective and true, as true as 2-plus-2-equals-4. Consequently, the liberal arts become "neutral," like culture, a discrete experience that one merely adds on to one's daily life. The humanities, especially, as well as the fine arts, have been relegated to the enrichment department of life, not to its essentials.

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THE LEGACY of this fact/value distinction has been to extend illegitimately, rather than truncate, the pride or arrogance of academics about their work, even in the humanities and the arts. It underlies the claim that the liberal arts are indeed quite apolitical, necessary for all, irrespective of one's origin, race, or class. The liberal arts are to emerge become academic in the best sense. They hide, furthermore, explicit values and avoid conflicts about how this world ought to be.

Clearly, many institutions now on the bandwagon to reaffirm the liberal arts do talk boldly about values, about making better people out of their students. But today's educators have absorbed too much respect for the illusion of scientific expertise to come out and state a credo of beliefs. In the new curricula and in the calls for liberal learning there is no vision of the good citizen, the good life, the ideal citizen. The idea of the liberal arts as mere technique, as teaching *how* to reason, to appreciate, write, read, holds sway.

The difficulty with the alternative, the explicit statement of values, is not only that it smacks of Oral Roberts University but that it overcommits the teaching faculty, who are not moral legislators or arbiters of values. The faculty are far too professional to assume the burden of cultivating gentlemen and decent women, as their nineteenth-century predecessors in prestigious American colleges did. Furthermore, they might not be liberally educated themselves, either in skills or in values. The danger, however, in the current trend at Harvard that liberal education is method, the *how-to* dimension of learning—is that it skirts the social and cultural issues that might inspire students to become liberally educated in the best sense.

Job Stuart Magruder's claim that he took his inspiration from a Williams College ethics course is a classic example of the false separation of the ability to think about ethics from ethical values themselves. The notion of liberal arts as helping people accomplish "creative synthesis," to make a "fine adjustment," through exposure to culture and to the past casts an illusion. It becomes a cultured individual and possessing a creative synthesis may not be ends in themselves. Consider the many "cultured" Nazis. Hence, we

must ask: Can the university actually help individuals develop a set of basic cultural and ethical—and therefore political and social—values? If so, which ones shall be stressed?

The liberal arts curricula now being revived are like advertising images, safe, serious, and inoffensive. By reducing the liberal arts to the neutral provision of methods of thinking and appreciating, educators have failed to come up with a vision of educational reform comparable to that of forty years ago. In Ortega's sense, we have not transcended the mere correction of abuses. It is ironic that the 1960s, precisely the era most characterized by a strong commitment to a vision of the future, is held responsible for the demise of the liberal arts. It is, in fact, the 1970s that have failed to come up with a new vision, offering only weak and regressive measures in the name of liberal learning, reinstituting old approaches, invoking a past golden age and calling it the new liberal arts.

THE DEEPER one probes into the curricular changes being recommended at various institutions, the more what appears as an expression of idealism reveals itself as clever self-interest—tactical means to assist universities facing difficult economic times ahead. Part of the explanation lies in the nature of leadership. The university presidents of today, unlike James B. Conant and Hutchins,* are preeminent as managers.

*When Conant died in the same year as Hutchins, the *New York Times* aptly noted that they had no successors who, like Conant, Hutchins, Charles R. Eliot, Alexander Meiklejohn, and William R. Harper, would exercise their authority and power on behalf of radical change as a result of deeply held beliefs about the right way to educate. They were not clever, eloquent, shrewd managers whose day was entirely consumed by running a complex, tightly regulated corporation. They had a bit of Nietzschean arrogance about their work. It is more than symbolic that two recent university presidents, Kingman Brewster of Yale and Robert Coen of Princeton, should become Ambassadors—positions in the late twentieth century of purely social, ceremonial, and business value—whereas Conant became High Commissioner of Germany at a critical time, and he and Hutchins were instrumental in the war effort and postwar policy. Wilson and even Eisenhower went from the university to the White House.

Even though they may have academic backgrounds, they see their mission as conservation—managing and preserving the past greatness of the universities in trying times rather than extending it. Just drop into the University Club or the Harvard Club in New York and try to tell the corporate magnate from the university or college president, not by clothes or manner, but by what they believe and say.

Beneath a morass of institutional self-interest and politics lies a serious cultural crisis of this and the next decade, which colleges and universities must, and can, address. The crisis is demonstrated by the growing illiteracy and ignorance in English, in the humanities, in science, in general knowledge and the ability to think and to express oneself. It reflects a profound alienation among young people, which lurks beneath their apparent conservatism and docility. The curriculum-reform movement must reach beyond short-range benefits for institutions and counteract the alienation, and transform the university and the educational structure decisively. Only then can higher education contribute to a better, more humane era at the close of this century.

What is the character of the student alienation that the new efforts cannot now reach? Consider the weak ability of entering students to read and write. It persists in the face of real intellectual gifts. Many even have superior high-school grades and test scores. Yet paper after paper is garbled. Documents from the French Revolution, from Luther, St. Augustine, or Goethe seem beyond their grasp. Students come to class extremely well-prepared, with worked-over texts full of notes and underlinings and other evidences of hard work. What is wrong? We are seeing for one thing the lasting effect of twenty years of insistent media distractions. These students have lost the ability to concentrate and to cultivate their memories. Sitting in one place for a long time absorbing a logical written argument is not a habit, at home or in school. Despite good verbal facility, students are chronically unable to retain what they read, to absorb arguments or facts in their heads long enough to make them their own.

The reason behind all this is a profound and devastating absence of inner motivation. Fundamentally, students

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Based on an actual call made to the toll-free 24-hour Whirlpool Cool-Line® service.

Telephone Rings)

Cool-Line Consultant: Whirlpool Cool-Line. May I help you?

Man: I certainly hope so. I rush home from work, gobble up dinner, pack the kids in the wagon and head out to pick up our new Whirlpool washer. Then back home, hook it all up and...nothing.

Consultant: Nothing?

Man: Absolutely zotz. Our four year old can make the door open and close, but that's all. So now, the store's closed, my wife's really steamed and I'm not too thrilled myself. Now what are you gonna do about it?

Consultant: Our Cool-Line service is here to help get things working for you. Let's run through a quick check. First, now don't get mad, did you plug it in?

Man: We're not that dense.

Consultant: Both water lines hooked up and the water turned on?

Man: Of course.

Consultant: And you set the dial to regular wash and pulled out the control knob?

Man: Look, the washer really doesn't work! Might take the repairman a whole day to fix it.

Consultant: Might take just a few minutes. You see, Whirlpool appliances are designed to make servicing as quick and easy as possible. But before you call for service, let me ask you one more question.

Man: Shoot.

Consultant: Why did you

buy a new washer? What was wrong with the old one?

Man: It was really on the fritz. Blowing fuses and stuff. The service guy said it was hopeless.

Consultant: Is there any chance that old washer blew a fuse one last time without your knowing it? Will you check?

Man: Oh my aching...hang on. (MINUTES LATER) This is embarrassing. All we needed was a new fuse. I'm sorry I hassled you.

Consultant: Sorry you had trouble. Glad we could help.

Man: Hey, thanks again.

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live in college with the attitude of
servants or factory workers. They
alienated from the task of learn-
ing, which they think is an oppressive
necessity, like wage labor. That learn-
ing is liberating (liberal arts?), a
route to freedom, is wholly foreign.
Students have lost the instinct that
reading Dickens or Hegel will do some-
thing for their spirit and for the way
they approach life, work, love, and
sure. Cultural artifacts have become
standalone objects with which professional
practitioners—faculty—make their liv-
ings. Nothing seems to lead to the
sense that learning is significant and
essential. The problem is not that stu-
dents, like their predecessors of ten
years ago, crave relevance; the prob-
lem is that they are no longer able to
recognize relevance. The pain of resis-
tance to society has been dulled into
immunity to caring. To be a good
student is now almost exclusively to
be an incipient professional or an ap-
prentice to a faculty member. Motiva-
tion is tied exclusively to the useless-
ness of an area of study for future
career or social display. In Hannah
Arendt's terms, being a college student
is become labor, where the result is
alienated to the individual and the process
is important—with the sole exception
of the degree. It is less like creative
work or the activity of the artisan,
where the skill emerges from a desire
to fashion an end product of contin-
uing value. That critical thinking is a
means of spiritual rescue to freedom
and self-confidence is foreign; and it
is a point of view as suspect as the
testimony of men who witness miracles.
These students have learned from us.
They are not themselves to blame.

WHAT SHOULD COLLEGES
and universities do?
There are three decisive
contributions that they
could make to meet the cultural cri-
sis. They could make a decisive differ-
ence. Like most reforms, they will in-
volve a serious challenge to our institu-
tions and educational structure.
First, the new liberal arts should
have a point of view. A liberal-arts
core curriculum should stress common
substance, not methods, with a cogent
approach to the central personal and
political questions facing students.
Second, such a liberal education could

replace the last two or three years of
high school, since secondary schooling
is the weakest link in the educational
structure. It is the least likely to change,
especially with Proposition 13. It is
not sufficiently challenging for adoles-
cents who are maturing at an earlier
age. Many are ready at fourteen and
fifteen to escape the thin, regimented
experience that is the typical Ameri-
can senior high school. Third, the uni-
versities should alter the distribution
of power within the university away
from specialized departments, rewrite
Ph.D. requirements, and break the hold
the graduate faculties have on the un-
dergraduate curriculum and on the dis-
tribution of resources for the college
years. Colleges not part of universities
should disband a narrow departmental
structure and stop emulating universi-
ties in their thinking, governance, and
curricula. They should forget about
what Harvard is up to.

First, the curriculum. It should re-
spond to the major gaps facing to-
day's students, gaps that exacerbate
and do not lessen alienation toward
learning. The major popular focus of
a new curriculum might be a direct at-
tack on the literacy problem, but poor
reading and writing skills can be cured
only when the desire to read and write
in a sophisticated and critical manner
is developed. A few specific strategies
might help: 1.) the nurturing of a
sense of the past; 2.) the recognition
that an extraordinary scientific illiter-
acy among even the ostensibly educa-
ted will have increasingly devastating
political consequences; and 3.) the de-
veloping, among individuals, of an ac-
tive engagement in the arts.

History is needed because today's
student has little intellectual sense of
how the past has fashioned the present
and how the present will shape the
future. The sense of time, of memory,
of common purpose with individuals
whom one can never know would help
expand the horizon of the current gen-
eration of students. The materials for
the history portion of a core should be
largely original texts. Local history,
social history, non-Western history, and
comparative issues like urban develop-
ment should all play a role. Facts of
the past—who did what when and
where—are less significant than the
development of a coherent historical
sensitivity.

For today's students, science and

technology cannot be dispensable. Yet
with the exception of the science-bound
students, young people go through col-
lege with little inclination or ability
to develop a layman's grasp of science,
technology, and their implications.
That our society is increasingly de-
pendent in its ethical and political dis-
course on what science and technology
are capable of is clear. That the need
to understand that the limits as well as
the power of scientific and technologi-
cal expertise are essential to intelligent
citizen participation in democratic poli-
tics is likewise self-evident. Yet a se-
rious effort at a core general education
in science for the nonscientist is the
weakest link in all the current reforms.
The reason rests with the difficulty in
developing a curriculum that is at once
science and at the same time compre-
hensible. Including questions of social
and ethical implications increases the
time required of students to make any
headway at all in rectifying their sci-
entific illiteracy. The faculty in the sci-
ences are usually the most wedded to
specialization and vocationalism, most
interested in students as future sci-
entists, and contemptuous of "popular-
izing" their fields. But pressure must
be brought to bear to give science and
technology a larger role in a core cur-
riculum if we are to maintain the link
between education and democratic poli-
tics.

Last, the arts. Even in 1951 Lewis
Mumford noted that people were in-
creasingly apt to listen to the radio or
records rather than sing "a song freely
in the open air without involving any
mechanical aid." Increasingly our ex-
pressive capacities are left underdevel-
oped as we rely on ourselves as con-
sumers—of records, reproductions,
television, and movies. Despite all the
complaints of a Me First mood among
the young, the narcissism is a passive,
consuming narcissism. Universities and
colleges have never given equal place to
the practicing arts, as opposed to art
history and musicology. Students have
always responded to the encouragement
to fashion something of themselves
through the arts. The energy and will-
ingness to discipline oneself, to devel-
op the habit of self-expression, need
not be dependent on visible talent. It
need not be, as in the sciences, exclu-
sively the province of professionals. If
an active arts program were part of a
core curriculum, the habit of hard

work, careful analysis, and execution—of emotional attachment to the creation of something external to oneself—would transfer to the more traditional elements of a college curriculum. It would help transform future members of the audience for the arts from passive into active participants.

These three elements give some idea of what a core might look like. Beyond these, lies the larger problem of the relation of a college education to secondary education and to graduate education. Secondary schooling is the most bureaucratic, least effective in teaching, most troubled in terms of discipline, and lowest in teacher morale. Time in the junior and senior years is either wasted or too focused on college entrance. Colleges have always complained about high schools. In 1888, Charles Eliot, who graduated from Harvard at age nineteen, noted that the high school-college division in the accepted educational structure was probably arbitrary and delayed serious education for too long a time. Robert M. Hutchins, in the early 1940s, tried to do something about it by accelerating gifted students out of the sophomore year of high school right into the freshman year of college. A fresh look at this course of action is in order.

SINCE COLLEGES suffer directly from inadequately prepared students, they should take a hand in rectifying the problem. The chances of positively affecting students' alienation are increased the earlier one provides a stimulating education. Acceleration might be appropriate for the college-bound students in general rather than for only the very gifted. Colleges and universities should offer friendly, perhaps even taunting, competition to the secondary schools by developing accelerated courses, placing college courses in the high schools, as a few pioneering schools now do, and even advancing college into the ages of traditional high-school attendance, so that the general liberal-arts education of a young person would be complete at the age of nineteen or twenty rather than twenty-one or twenty-two. This would give students more time to explore vocational possibilities outside of schools without the anxieties associated with "losing time."


Looking beyond college, both colleges and undergraduate faculties at universities should challenge the graduate and professional schools, which have, over the past thirty-five years, wreaked havoc with the liberal arts. They have trained specialized teachers without general educations in the liberal arts. They have become the models of college faculty organization. Departments control hiring and firing, and their course sequences address not the special needs of undergraduates but the self-image of faculty which runs this way: a high-school teacher envies the college teacher's prestige and status; college teachers envy those who teach graduate students and who demonstrate high professional achievement; graduate faculties envy those at the Institute for Advanced Study, where no teaching is required at all. Where has the vocation of teaching gone? What has become of pride in the art of teaching? Colleges should reconsider the criteria by which they hire and fire faculty, and they should structure their faculty along the intellectual issues that inform the curriculum, rather than the professional patterns borrowed from graduate school.

The graduate schools themselves live a partial untruth, even on their own terms. How many Ph.D.'s are inspired by their graduate training to continue active scholarship? Recent surveys have shown that only a fraction of those completing the Ph.D. walk away with enough fervor or love and ambition to continue scholarship in their field. If training for high scholarship is not the *raison d'être* of the Ph.D., teaching certainly cannot be a substitute, for few if any Ph.D. programs train graduate students to teach. The Ph.D. requirements should be changed to involve serious specialization in a field remote from the individual's graduate field. It should make the reading of a finished thesis by an intelligent academic from a different discipline a serious matter, so that each Ph.D. is required to explain in common language the nature and significance of his or her specialized work. Finally, the type of scholarship encouraged by the university, especially among those dealing primarily with undergraduates, should stress the broad significance of scholarly problems, the breadth and ambition of the

issues rather than the narrow originality of perception as measured by professional standards.

High-level research and scholarship should be relegated to a proper and significant place but not be allowed to dominate the nature of undergraduate learning. Last, the requirements for degrees in law and medicine, given the absence of a serious liberal arts program in the undergraduate years, should involve some work in the philosophical, historical, and cultural implications of those professions, even if it delays degree attainment. The dominant professionals of our future—physicians and mental-health workers, lawyers and civil servants—should have the opportunity to gain a perspective on the everyday activity of their professions beyond the obvious technical one.

There happens to be a real cultural crisis out there, one that threatens to cheat young people out of a chance to learn and develop as private individuals and citizens. For the university to do nothing about it would be better than having it defraud students and the public by saying that it has now come to grips with the problem. Acknowledged ignorance might be preferable to the illusion of education. Really significant initiatives will not be easy or cosmetic, will not leave intact the education of faculty, the distribution of power in the university, the work loads of teachers, the transition between high school and college, and allocation of financial resources within the university. Reforms will of necessity shake the centralized, self-satisfied bureaucratic monster that is the modern university. Changing the rhetoric, berating the students, lamenting the present condition, slapping requirements on students, shuffling courses around, instituting a few new experiments, calling committees, and writing benign compromises that sound like recent State of the Union messages won't touch our cultural predicament. If education can play any role in retarding the seemingly voluntary suicide of our body politic and its culture, it should start now and forget the short-term gains, the petty institutional politics, the seemingly overpowering constraints, and above all the momentum of respectable conventional wisdom. □



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Western Electric

ADVICE TO A YOUNG SCIENTIST

Human action wisely undertaken

by P. B. Medawar

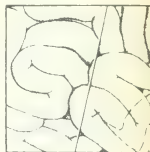
An anxiety that may trouble some novices—perhaps particularly women, who are victims still of the socially engendered habit of self-deprecation—is whether they have brains enough to do well in science. It is an anxiety they could well spare themselves, for one does not have to be terrifically brainy to be a good scientist. An intellectual antipathy or a total indifference to the life of the mind and an impatience with abstract ideas can surely be taken as contraindications, but there is nothing in experimental science that calls for great feats of ratiocination or preternatural gifts for deductive reasoning.

I do not wish to undervalue the importance of intellectual skills in science, but I would rather undervalue them than overrate them to the degree that might frighten recruits away. Different branches of science call for rather different abilities anyway, but after deriding the idea that there is any such thing as *the* scientist, I must not speak of "science" as if it were a single species of activity. To collect and classify beetles requires abilities, talents, and incentives quite different from those that enter into theoretical physics or statistical epidemiology. The pecking order within science (a most complicated *snobismus*) certainly rates theoretical physics above the taxonomy of beetles—in the collection and classification of beetles the order of nature is sought to spare us any great feat of judgment

or intellection: is there not a slot waiting for each beetle to fit into?

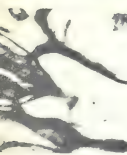
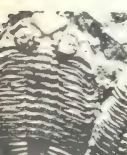
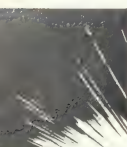
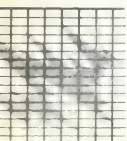
Any such supposition is merely inductive mythology, however, and any experienced taxonomist or paleobiologist will assure a beginner that taxonomy well done requires great deliberation, considerable powers of judgment, and a flair for the discernment of affinities that can come only with experience and the will to acquire it.

Because so many experimental sciences call for the use of manipulative skills, it is part of conventional wisdom to declare that a prediction for or proficiency at mechanical or constructive play portends a special aptitude for experimental science. A taste for "Baconian experimentation" is often thought significant, too—for example, an insistent inner impulsion to find out what happens when several ounces of a mixture of sulfur, saltpeter, and finely powdered charcoal is ignited. We cannot tell if the successful prosecution of such an experiment genuinely portends a successful research career because only they become scientists who don't find out. To devise some means of ascertaining whether or not these conventional beliefs hold water is work for sociologists of science. I do not feel, though, that a novice need be turned away from science by clumsiness or an inability to mend radio sets or bikes: these skills are not instinctive—they can be learned, as dexterity can be.



Elizabeth Van Halbe

P.B. Medawar, Nobel Laureate in Medicine and Physiology in 1960, is the author of *The Life Science: Current Ideas of Biology* (1977) and of the forthcoming *Advice to a Young Scientist* (Harper & Row), from which Harper's has excerpted the sections on these pages. Copyright © 1979 by P.B. Medawar.



On the choice of problems

It can be said with complete confidence that *any scientist of any age who wants to make important discoveries must study important problems*. Dull or piffling problems yield dull or piffling answers. It is not enough that a problem should be "interesting"—almost any problem is interesting if it is studied in sufficient depth. A problem must be such that it *matters* what the answer is—whether to science generally or to mankind. Scientists considered collectively are remarkably single-minded in their views about what is important and what is not. It is very sad if a graduate student gives a seminar and no one comes or no one asks a question, but not so sad as the question gallantly put by a senior or a colleague that betrays that he hasn't listened to a word.

The number and complexity of the techniques and supporting disciplines used in research are so large that a novice may easily be frightened into postponing research in order to carry on with the process of "equipping himself." As there is no knowing in advance where a research enterprise may lead and what kinds of skills it will require as it unfolds, this process of "equipping oneself" has no predeterminable limits and is bad psychological policy anyway: we always need to know and understand a great deal more than we do already and to master many more skills than we now possess. The great incentive to learning a new skill or supporting discipline is an urgent need to use it. For this reason many scientists (I certainly among them) do not learn new skills or master new disciplines until the pressure is upon them to do so; whereupon they can be mastered relatively quickly. It is the lack of this pressure on those who are forever "equipping themselves" and who show an ominous tendency to become "night-class habitués" that sometimes makes them tired and despondent in spite of all their diplomas and certificates of proficiency.

Similar considerations apply to a novice's inclination to spend weeks or months "mastering the literature." Too much book learning may crab and confine the imagination, and endless poring over the research of others can sometimes be a research-substitute, much as reading romantic fiction may be a substitute for real-life romance. Scientists take different views about "the literature": some read very little, relying upon *viva voce* information, circulated "preprints," and the beat-

ing of tom-toms by which advances in the field come to be known to those who want to know them. Such communications as these are for the privileged, though: they are enjoyed by those who have already made headway enough to hold views others would like to hear in return. The beginner *must* read, but intently and choosily and not too much.

It is psychologically important to *get results*, no matter if they are not original. Getting results, even by repeating another's work, brings with it a great accession of self-confidence: the young scientist feels himself one of the club at last; he can chip in at seminars and at scientific meetings with "My own experience was . . ." or "I got exactly the same results" or "I'd be inclined to agree that for this particular purpose medium 94 is definitely better than 93," and then can sit down again, tremulous but exultant.

A caveat for women

Young women anxious to defend the choice of a scientific career against the anxious and cautionary objections of parents and even old-fashioned schoolteachers should beware of citing Madame Curie as evidence that women can do well in science. It is not Madame Curie but the tens of thousands of women gainfully and often happily engaged in scientific pursuits who should be called in evidence.

The case for rejoicing in the increasing number of women who enter the learned professions has nothing primarily to do with providing them with gainful employment or giving them an opportunity to develop their full potential. It is above all because the world is now such a complicated and rapidly changing place that it cannot even be kept going (let alone improved, as we meliorists think it can be) without using the intelligence and skill of approximately 50 percent of the human race.

On life and manners

A scientist soon discovers that he has become a member of the cast of *them* in the sense of "what mischief are *they* up to now?"

Scientists naturally want to be thought well of and, like other professional men, would like their calling to be respected. They will find from the beginning, however, that upon learning they are scientists the people they meet tend to adopt one of two opinions, which cannot both be right: because a man is a scientist his judgment on any topic whatso-

ever is either (a) especially valuable or (b) virtually worthless. These opinions are of that habitual and inflexible kind that we tend to associate with political beliefs and are every bit as difficult to reason with. An attempt should nevertheless be made not to acerbate either condition of mind: "Just because I am a scientist doesn't mean I'm anything of an expert on..." is a formula for all seasons.

The cruel presumption of his Philistinism may sometimes prompt a scientist to pretend to cultural interests and a cultural understanding he does not possess: in extreme cases his audience may have to put up with a little parade of secondhand cultural aperçus from fashionable critics or misquotations from the *Meditations of Cardinal Poggi Bonsi*. Scientists should be on their guard, though. Humbug is usually easy to identify, in scientists easier than most, for if they are not used to intellectual or literary chatter they are all too likely to give themselves away by mispronunciations that no one will correct or by cultural misconceptions so vast that no one will think it worthwhile to dispute them.

A scientist who has been culturally snubbed or who feels himself otherwise at a disadvantage may sometimes solace himself by a sour withdrawal from the world of the humanities and the fine arts. An alternative medication for bruised psyches is to become a know-all: one's audience is thenceforward bedazzled by fashionable talk of scenarios, paradigms, Gödel's theorem, the import of Chomsky's linguistics, and the extent of Rosicrucian influences on the fine arts. Becoming a know-all is not, however, a serious occupational risk for scientists: the worst know-alls I have known were both economists.

Scientists are assumed to be illiterate and to have coarse or vulgar aesthetic sensibilities until the contrary is proved; however much it may annoy, a young scientist must again be warned against attempting any parade of culture to rebut this imputation. In any case the accusation is in one respect well founded: I have in mind the total indifference of many young scientists to the history of ideas, even to the ideas that lie at the root of their own research. I have tried at times to excuse this attitude of mind by pointing out that the growth of science is of a special kind and that science does in some sense contain its cultural history within itself; everything a scientist does is a function of what others have done before him: the past is embodied in every new conception and even in the possibility of its being conceived at all.

A most distinguished French historian, M. Fernand Braudel, has said of history that "it devours the present." I do not quite understand what he means (those profound French epigrams, you know), but in science it is surely the other way about: the present devours the past. This does something to extenuate a scientist's misguided indifference to the history of ideas. Yet a person who is not interested in the growth and flux of ideas is probably not interested in the life of the mind, and a young scientist working in an advancing field of research should certainly try to identify the origin and growth of current opinions. Although self-interest should not be his motive, he will probably end with a stronger sense of personal identity if he can see where he fits into the scheme of things.

On collaboration

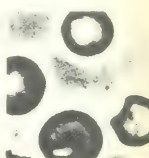
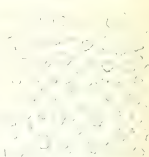
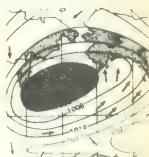
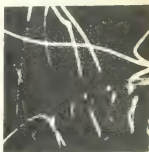
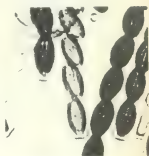
As nearly all my scientific work has been done in collaboration with others, I regard myself as an authority on the subject. Scientific collaboration is not at all like cooks elbowing each other from the pot of broth: nor is it like artists working on the same canvas or engineers working out how to start a tunnel simultaneously from both sides of a mountain in such a way that the contractors do not miss each other in the middle and emerge independently at opposite ends.

It is, in the planning stage anyway, more like a session of gag writers, for although each one knows, as all scientists know, that having an idea—a brainwave—can only be a personal event, each also knows that an atmosphere can be created in which one member of the team sparks off the others so that they all build upon and develop one another's ideas. In the outcome nobody is quite sure who thought of what. The main thing is that something is thought of. A young scientist who feels a strong compulsion to say "That was my idea, you know" or "Now that you have all come round to my way of thinking..." is not cut out for collaborative work. He, and his colleagues as well, would do better if he worked on his own.

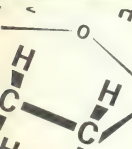
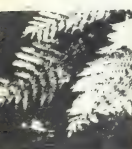
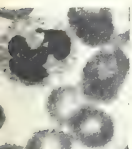
A few Polonian precepts can do something to indicate whether a scientist is cut out for collaboration. Unless he likes his colleagues and admires them for their special gifts, he should shun it; collaboration requires some generosity of spirit, and a young scientist who can recognize in himself an envious temperament and is jealous of his mates should on no account try to work with others.

Each teammate should intone to himself

"Scientists are assumed to be illiterate and to have coarse or vulgar aesthetic sensibilities until the contrary is proved."



P. B. Medawar
ADVICE
TO A YOUNG
SCIENTIST



from time to time: "Amazing though it may seem, I, too, have a number of behavioral traits that make it almost miraculous that anyone can put up with me: my slowness over figures, for example, my practice of whistling vocal gems from the operas through that gap in my teeth, and my habit of losing crucial documents (such as the only key to the double-blind trial)." My own faults as a colleague? did someone ask? Grave and numerous, surely, but not to such a degree as to have lost me the friendship of anyone I have ever worked with. I specially enjoy collaboration and have been rewarded by benefiting all my life from the collaboration of a succession of unusually able and likable colleagues.

When the time comes for the collaborative work to be published, a young scientist will naturally expect to figure in the credit titles, but not more prominently than his colleagues think fair: they will not do him down. I myself like and have usually adopted the Royal Society's alphabetical rule, believing that the rebuffs and disappointments of the world's Zygysmondias are in the long view counterbalanced by the undeservedly good fortune enjoyed by the Aaronsons of the world.

It is an important point of manners that members of married research teams should never attempt any public attribution of merit for the outcome of joint research—an attempt just as offensive when one partner allots all the credit to the other as when he takes it for him or herself.

The fact that every member of a research team may have disagreeable personal habits that make collaboration more of a penance than a joy applies with equal force to married couples, though with the unhappy difference that the traditional candor of communication between man and wife may remove the mannerly embargo on telling a colleague how revolting he is: mannerliness does as much for collaboration as magnanimity: a principle that can hardly apply with lesser force to man-and-wife than to other teams.

Snobismus

When I began research it was taken for granted at Lord's Cricket Ground, the game's headquarters, that so deep a cultural and social abyss separated professionals from amateurs that they should enter the playing field by different gates, even when members of the same team; at Wimbledon, professionals were not even allowed to compete. There is more sense in the latter ruling, for at lawn tennis amateurs need protection from professionals,

whereas cricket, as George Orwell pointed out, has the remarkable distinction that amateurs can hold their own against pros. Something of the same *snobismus* was at that time extended as a matter of course to technicians who were regarded as laboratory servants to fetch and carry, do most of the more tedious or smellier jobs, and execute faithfully the instructions of the maestro, who sat at his desk having great thoughts. This has all changed—and very much for the better. Technicians' jobs are now sought after to a degree that makes it possible for employers to insist upon entry standards as high as those that admit to universities. With a recognized career structure and increasing confidence in their own abilities, technicians have gone up in their own estimation, too—a most important element in "job satisfaction." Technicians often are and always ought to be better than "academic" or teaching staff at certain theoretical or practical operations. "Ought to be" because a technician can sometimes be more specialized than the staff member for whom he works: teaching duties or administration and a variety of other commitments may often oblige an academic staff member to keep more balls in the air than a technician, and he may have too many graduate or undergraduate students to make it possible for him to become adequately proficient at all the things he should be able to do.

Although such a declaration will shock the diehards who still live in the days when it was thought proper for professionals to be excluded from the courts, technicians are colleagues in collaborative research: they must be kept fully in the picture about what an experiment is intended to evaluate and about the way in which the procedures decided upon by mutual consultation might "conduce to the sum of the business" (Bacon).

On moral dilemma

There is nothing about being a scientist that should or need deafen one or close one's mind to the entreaties of conscience. Contractual obligations and the desire to do what is right can pose genuinely distressing problems. The time to grapple is *before* a moral dilemma arises. If a scientist has reason to believe that a research enterprise cannot but promote the discovery of a nastier or more expeditious quietus for mankind, then he must not enter upon it—unless he is in favor of such a course of action. It is hardly possible that he should recognize his abhorrence of such an ambition the first time he stirs the cauldron. If he *does*

enter upon morally questionable research and then publicly deplores it, his beating of the breast will have a hollow and unconvincing sound.

If, in spite of the most anxious precautions, a scientist makes a mistake about a matter of fact; if the results were caused by an impurity in a supposedly pure enzyme preparation or if hybrid mice were used in error for mice of an inbred strain, then the mistake must be admitted with the least possible delay. Human nature is such that the scientist may even gain credit from such a declaration and will not lose face—except perhaps in the bathroom mirror.

Though faulty hypotheses are excusable on the ground that they will be superseded in due course by acceptable ones, they can do grave harm to those who hold them because scientists who fall deeply in love with their hypotheses are proportionately unwilling to take no as an experimental answer. Sometimes, instead of exposing a hypothesis to a cruelly critical test, they caper around it, testing only subsidiary implications, or else follow up sidelines that have an indirect bearing on the hypothesis without exposing it to possible refutation.

I cannot give any scientist of any age better advice than this: *The intensity of the conviction that a hypothesis is true has no bearing on whether it is true.* The importance of the strength of our conviction is only to provide a proportionately strong incentive to find out if the hypothesis will stand up to critical evaluation.

Poets and musicians may easily think this sadly cautionary advice and characteristic of the spiritless fact-finding they suppose scientific inquiry to be. For them, I guess, what is done in a blaze of inspiration has a special authenticity. I guess also that this is only true where there is talent bordering upon genius.

On priorities

Those who are anxious to discredit scientists, especially the notion (not held by scientists themselves) that their work is a cool, soft, and dispassionate quest for truth, are fond of calling attention to their anxiety about matters to do with priority: an anxiety that the work or ideas that he believes to be his own should be credited to him and not to any others.

This anxiety is sometimes thought to be a new one—to be a natural consequence of the obligation upon a modern scientist to hold

his own in a crowded and competitive world—but it is entirely clear that disputes over priority, sometimes of a specially venomous and unforgiving kind, are as old as science itself. It is a natural consequence of the fact that when several scientists are trying to solve the same problem more than one may hit upon a solution—or the solution, if there is only one.

Artists, I suspect, are a little contemptuous of a scientist's anxiety for credit, but then their situation is in no way comparable. The problems that confront them do not have a unique solution; and—as I have pointed out on another occasion—the twenty years Wagner spent composing the first three operas of *The Ring* were not clouded by the fear that someone else might nip in ahead of him with *Götterdämmerung*.

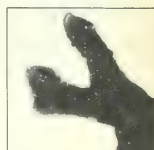
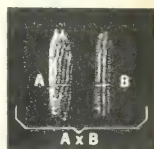
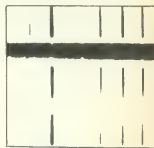
Whenever pride of possession is an important consideration—especially when the property in dispute is an idea—most people feel a strong sense of ownership. Indeed, anxiety about priority is to be found in all walks of life, I believe; sometimes, as with car or dress designers, it is a matter of securing their livelihood, but sometimes it is an aggressive arrogance: Field Marshal Lord Montgomery of Alamein, I have learned, was rapacious in his hunger for personal credit, even when it was not deserved.

Problems to do with priority are especially acute in science, because scientific ideas must eventually become public property so that the only sense of ownership a scientist can ever enjoy is that of having been the *first* to have an idea—to have hit upon a solution or the solution before anyone else. I see nothing wrong in pride of possession, though in a scientific context, as in any other, possessiveness, meanness, secretiveness, and selfishness deserve all the contempt they get.

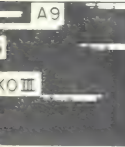
A scientist who wishes to keep his friends must not be forever scoffing and so earn a reputation for habitual disbelief; but he owes it to his profession not to acquiesce in or appear to condone folly, superstition, or demonstrably unsound belief. The recognition and castigation of folly will not win him friends, but it may gain him some respect.

Over a period of years I have collected a little treasury of more or less fallacious beliefs, and a discussion of some of these will help to exemplify criticisms of the kind I think just. How often has it not been contemptuously said that “modern medicine cannot even cure the common cold”? What is offensive is not the statement's falsity (it is

“A scientist who wishes to keep his friends must not be forever scoffing and so earn a reputation for habitual disbelief.”



B. Medawar ADVICE TO A YOUNG SCIENTIST



true) but its implication: Isn't it pointless to pour billions of dollars into cancer research when modern medicine...? et cetera. The problem here is the almost universally held belief that clinically mild diseases have simple causes while grave diseases are complex and proportionately difficult to understand or cure. There is no truth in either: a common cold, caused by one or more of a multiplicity of upper respiratory viruses and with an overlay of allergic reactivity, is an extremely complex ailment. On the other hand, some grave diseases such as phenylketonuria have relatively simple origins: some can be prevented—as phenylketonuria can be—or cured, as many bacterial infections can be. And some forms of cancer are simple in origin and can be circumvented: the cancers caused by smoking and by certain industrial chemicals.

Another way in which a scientist loses friends is to call attention to the tricks that selective memory can play upon judgment. "Three times, no less, I dreamed of Cousin Winifred and on the very next day she rang me up. If that doesn't prove that dreams can foretell the future, then I'm sure I don't know what does." But, the young scientist expostulates, on how many occasions did you dream of Cousin Winifred without a subsequent telephone call?—and is it not a fact that she rings up almost every day?

Superstitions are not so easy to cope with. Probably it is better not to try to reason with astrological predictions, but it may be worthwhile just once to call attention to the extreme *a priori* unlikelihood of their being true and to point to the lack of any convincing evidence that they are so. But perhaps after all it is best to let sleeping unicorns lie—I myself have for some time past abstained from discussing spoon bending or other manifestations of "psychokinesis."

On ambition

Considered as a motive force that helps to get things done, ambition is not necessarily a deadly sin, but excess of ambition can certainly be a disfigurement. An ambitious young scientist is marked out by having no time for anything or anybody that does not promote or bear upon his work. Seminars or lectures that do not qualify are shunned, and those who wish to discuss them are dismissed as bores. The ambitious make too obvious a point of being polite to those who can promote their interests and are proportionately uncivil to those who cannot: "I hope we don't have to be nice to *him*," an ambitious young Oxford

don said to me of a kindly old duffer with an amateurish interest in science who was dining at High Table: he wasn't. Although this particular episode did not harm him, it was symptomatic of a state of mind that did.

When dealing with older scientists the young should not assume that their elders remember their names or still less their faces, notwithstanding that friendly chat on the boardwalk of Atlantic City at the federation meetings as recently as a year beforehand.

Nor should the young attempt to ingratiate themselves with their seniors: such attempts miscarry so often that they had better be abjured. A senior scientist is much more flattered by finding that his views are the subject of serious criticism than by sycophantic and sometimes obviously simulated respect. A young scientist will not, however, ingratiate himself with a prospective patron by exposing his views to scathing public criticism. Older scientists expect nothing more from the young than civility. The English essayist William Cobbett was very firm about the evils of "sucking up": "Look not for success to favour, partiality, and friendship or to what is called *interest*: write it upon your heart, that you will depend solely on your merit and your own exertions."

For their part, older scientists must remember—that I constantly forget—that not even the most brilliant of his juniors can remember the great stir caused by O. T. Avery's announcement that the type transformation of *pneumococci* was mediated through the action of DNA. Most of today's graduate students weren't born in 1944 anyway, and events that happened as long ago as that are thought by the young to belong to a pre-Cambrian era of scientific growth. The young, moreover, can tire of hearing what a remarkable fellow old Dale was, what a card Astbury, and how cruelly adept J. J. Thompson at putting his juniors down. The young scientist will find, though—as Lord Chesterfield could have told him—that if he simulates interest in these yarns he may become interested in spite of himself and learn something that may improve his mind.

Young scientists wishing to be thought even younger and more inexperienced than they really are should lose no opportunity to gibe at and belittle the administration, whatever it may be. It would help them to grow up if they realized that scientific administrators are problem-solvers as they are—and are working, too, for the advancement of learning. In

some ways, a young scientist should reflect, the administrator's task is the more difficult, for whereas well-established laws of nature discourage a young scientist from attempting to circumvent the Second Law of Thermodynamics, no comparable body of administrative common law assures the administrator that he can't get a quart into or out of a pint pot or money out of a stone—feats executed or attempted daily by administrators trying to raise funds. Nor can they turn barren ground overnight into sumptuously equipped laboratories.

Young scientists may be wrong to assume that scientific administrators who have had scientific careers will necessarily be the most sympathetically attentive to their needs; for, having been scientists and therefore supplicants themselves, they are likely to know all the tricks for trying to raise funds—and in particular the argument that if only the work currently in progress could be prolonged for a few years it would dizzyingly expedite our understanding of the etiology of cancer or of the mechanism of cell division.

A senior scientist usually turns to administration because he believes that this is the best way to contribute to the advancement of learning—which is, or ought to be, a young scientist's ambition, too. Such a decision is not made without personal sacrifice: often it means giving up research, for major administrative jobs are demanding and make it impossible to continue other activities with the obsessional single-mindedness required by almost any human endeavor that is to be well done, including administration itself.

Young scientists must on no account complain that they don't have enough say in things and then complain even more when they are invited to serve on committees that will give them the say they think they ought to have. Service on committees, young scientists will find, eats up time they would really much prefer spending in the laboratory.

At some stage in his life a young scientist will inevitably have to give a paper to a learned society, though not before he has tried it out on his mates at, for example, a departmental seminar. The latter is a friendly and relaxed occasion, but a paper to a learned society requires a little more address. *Under no circumstances whatsoever should a paper be read from a script.* It is hard to overestimate the dismay and resentment of an audience that has to put up with a paper read hurriedly in an even monotone: Speak from notes, young scientist; to speak without is a form of showing off and only creates the impression (per-

haps well founded) that the same story has been told over and over again. Notes should be brief and never consist of long paragraphs of stately prose. If a few cues aren't sufficient to get a speaker into motion then he must go over the topic repeatedly—not necessarily aloud—until the right words come at the appropriate stimulus. I early found it to be a great help when trying to expound a difficult concept to write (*EXPLAIN THIS*) after it appears in the notes—a device that of course forces a speaker to find natural words.

A torrential outpouring of words may make the speaker think that he is being brilliant, but his audience is more likely to think him glib. A measured delivery with perhaps a touch of gravity is what Polonius would surely have recommended.

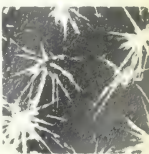
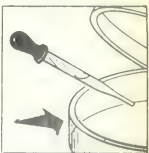
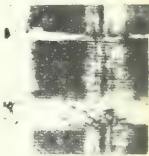
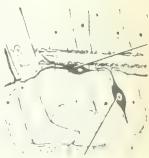
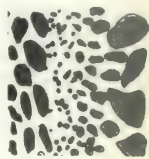
On writing a paper

The traditional reason given for a scientist's reluctance to write a paper is that it takes time away from research; but the real explanation is that writing a paper—writing anything, indeed, even the begging letters that are necessary if a laboratory is to remain solvent—is something most scientists know they are bad at: it is a skill they have not acquired.

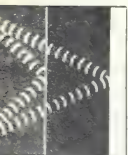
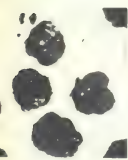
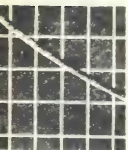
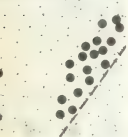
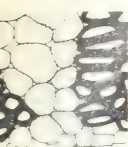
I feel disloyal but dauntlessly truthful in saying that most scientists do *not* know how to write, for insofar as style does betray "*l'homme même*" they write as if they hated writing and wanted above all else to have done with it. The only way to learn how to write is to read, to study good models, and to practice. I do not mean to practice in the sense in which young pianists practice "The Merry Peasant," but practice by writing whenever writing is called for, instead of making excuses for not doing so, and write, if necessary, over and over again, until you achieve clarity and your style, if not graceful, is at least not raw and angular. A good writer never makes one feel as if one were wading through mud or picking one's way with bare feet through broken glass.

No number of "don'ts" will make a "do," but certain practices should certainly be shunned: one such was introduced into American English from Germany—that of using nouns attributively (as if they were adjectives), sometimes stringing them all together to make one huge nounlike monster in constant danger of falling apart. A skillful linguist but habitual liar once told me of a single word in German standing for "the widow of the man who issued tickets at reduced prices for admission on Sundays to the zoo." If I

"I feel disloyal but dauntlessly truthful in saying that most scientists do *not* know how to write."



ADVICE TO A YOUNG SCIENTIST



myself have not read about "vegetable oil polyunsaturated fatty acid guinea pig skin delayed type hypersensitivity reaction properties," I have read some equally daunting nounal phrase. An incentive to write like this comes from editors who restrict the length of a paper so that a scientist who makes one word do the work of ten may feel he is one up on the editor.

Another little rule (for medical scientists specially) is that mice, rats, and other laboratory animals should never be injected. Few hypodermic needles are large enough for even the smallest mouse to pass through, especially if it is injected with something. ("Mice were injected with rabbit serum albumin mixed with Freund's adjuvant," we read—ah, but what into? the cry goes up.) Mice should receive injections or substances should be injected into them. Preciosity?—considered in isolation, yes, but it is the accumulation of such errors of taste that disfigures what could otherwise be a straightforward and readable paper. Avoid, too, such weary tropes as "the role of..." (or "the part played by...") "adrenocortical hormones in immunity." Why not write instead "the contribution of adrenal cortical hormones to... et cetera"? Give thought to prepositions, also: the regulation of electrolytes in the body is mediated not by but *through* the adrenal gland. Again, we are (or are not) tolerant *of*, not tolerant *to*, errors of literary judgment and so on.

A thought to bear in mind is that good writing upon a subject is almost always shorter than bad writing on the same subject.

The efficacy of science

Many young scientists hope that the science they come to love can be the agent of a social transformation leading to the betterment of mankind; accordingly they lament that so few politicians are scientifically trained and that so few have a deep understanding of the promise and the accomplishments of science. These lamentations betray a deep misunderstanding of the nature of the most exigent problems that confront the world: overpopulation, and how to achieve harmonious coexistence in a multiracial society. These are not scientific problems and do not admit of scientific solutions, but it does not mean that scientists are confined to being shocked spectators of events that threaten the well-being of mankind; scientists, as scientists, will find that they have necessary and distinctive contributions to make to the solution of these problems—but they are solutions that fall short of ushering

in the millennium. As to overpopulation, for example, they can try to devise harmless and usable methods of birth control—not at all an easy task, considering how much of an organism's physiology and behavioral repertoire is devoted to the propagation of its kind. But, supposing them to be successful, they will have no special skills for solving the subsequent political, administrative, and educational problems of bringing these contraceptive measures into use among peoples who cannot read hortatory pamphlets, are not well used to taking precautions, and may anyway want to have as many children as possible. Again, what can a scientist as such do about inter-racial tensions? Here his function is more likely to be critical than political: he will expose, maybe, the preposterous pretensions of racialism and the whole farrago of genetic elitism that grew out of the writings of wicked old Sir Francis Galton. He may in the end convince political wrongdoers in the domain of race relations that they must not look to science to uphold or condone their malefactions. In short there are innumerable ways in which scientists can work for the melioration of human affairs.

The functions of a social mechanic or critic might be thought by many scientists to diminish their own—and science's—standing in the world. These would be mean-minded sentiments, though, and scientists will lose the influence they ought to and can exert if their pretensions are too grand or the claims they make for the efficacy of science exceed its capabilities.

The role I envisage for the scientist is that which may be described as "scientific meliorism." A meliorist is simply one who believes that the world can be made a better place ("Ah, but what do you mean by better?") by human action wisely undertaken: meliorists, moreover, believe that they can undertake it. Legislators and administrators are characteristically meliorists, and the thought that they are so is an important element of their personal *raison d'être*. They realize that improvements are most likely to be brought about by identifying what is amiss and then trying to put it right—by procedures that fall short of transforming the whole of society or recasting the entire legal system. Meliorists are comparatively humble people who try to do good and are made happy by evidence that it has been done. This is ambition enough for a wise scientist and it does not by any means diminish science: the declared purpose of the oldest and most famous scientific society in the world is no more grandiose than that of "improving natural knowledge." □



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THE MONEY VANISHES

Certain matters relating to T. Bertram Lance
and various financial institutions

by L. J. Davis

The indictment last May of Bert Lance, the former Budget Director, on charges that he conspired to violate federal banking law hardly caused a stir in citadels normally sensitive to scandal. Some members of the press, perhaps feeling that Lance had already been tried and convicted, reacted to the seventy-one-page indictment with the casual comment that most of the allegations were already public knowledge. At the White House, ten minutes after it was learned that Lance would be charged by the Atlanta grand jury, the President went jogging around the South Lawn. And few in the political opposition used the event as an occasion to take to the microphones and preach publicly on the virtues of a balanced checkbook. If Lance had any luck at all in the entire matter, it was that his brush with the law occurred in this jaded decade, during which many politicians, including a few running for President, have faced a judge and jury.

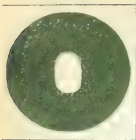
Although the potential for scandal abounds—given that Jimmy Carter appointed to the directorship of the Office of Management and Budget his best friend, who, it is now alleged, had a penchant for writing bad checks—the Lance case, in its complexity, defies understanding. What Bert Lance did while chairman of the Calhoun Bank and then as president of the National Bank of Georgia would be ever so much easier to comprehend if Lance and his associates had donned stocking masks, brandished shotguns, and entered the banks in search of fat payrolls—but that did not happen. As a result, the allegations against Lance build in the reports, interviews, and subpoenaed bank documents

that have accumulated since 1976 in the offices of those charged with the investigation. This group includes, at one stage or another, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Comptroller of the Currency, a special prosecutor within the Justice Department, and several committees in Congress, in addition to the grand jury.

By spending three months with the public record, L. J. Davis has assembled a chronology of the charges against Lance. From documents difficult to obtain and from persons familiar with the labyrinth of American banking, he has put into English the statistical diagnosis of Lance's fiscal condition. The indictment, something of a summary of these probings, is the tip of a paper iceberg, the extent of which can be measured by the five bound volumes of the hearings conducted by the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs. The documents are testimony that banking is no longer the quaint endeavor of men shifting gold bars from one pile to another, but the work of silicon chips in high-speed computers, in which fictitious money can become the possession of the shrewdest programmer.

Despite the formality of the indictment, in the slow progression toward justice it is but another interim report, although one more specific than that delivered by Jimmy Carter in 1977, when it was thought in the White House that Lance might be able to hold onto his job. "Bert," the President said, after dismissing the allegations against his Budget Director, "I'm proud of you." —Ed.

L. J. Davis is a novelist, critic, and investigative reporter. His most recent novel is Walking Small (Braziller).



NE OF THE more interesting if somewhat overlooked changes wrought by the Carter Administration has been the substitution of small towns for dogs as the semi-official symbol of Executive purity. Johnson had his beagles.

Nixon had King Timahoe. Gerald Ford had Liberty. Jimmy Carter has Plains.

True, a town isn't exactly something that can be photogenically frolicked with in the Rose Garden, nor can you pull its ears on television, but unlike a dog, it is an extremely good vehicle for demonstrating, through innocence by association, the humility and solidity of the Executive character. It is the old log cabin updated and improved. A small town is full of folks who have a way of marching through the suburban imagination like the supporting players in an old Andy Hardy movie, true blue, upstanding, and ever so slightly but endearingly nuts. The rest of us might just as well surrender our franchise and lay our cynicism down in restful sleep; if their anointed favorite son had ever got badly out of line—if he had, say, looted the local bank—they wouldn't have let him get to first base, much less to the Oval Office.

It was therefore extremely fortunate for Bert Lance that, when his hour of need struck at last, he was able to imitate his erstwhile best friend and wave Calhoun, Georgia, before the nation like a banner with a strange device. While he didn't exactly inform the Senators that it was an earthly paradise set in a garden without blemish, he might as well have; he missed no opportunity to remind his auditors that he was but a simple country banker from a place that, well, might not be much by some standards, although for his part, he was proud to call it home. In a way, it was a fair trade. Mr. Lance may have appropriated what is, to date, Mr. Carter's only successful symbol, but it seems to be a reasonable enough compensation for Mr. Lance's invaluable lessons in how to borrow money for one purpose and use it for another. (I confess that this is speculation; maybe he didn't teach Mr. Carter how to do that at all. Maybe he only taught Mr. Carter's brother or Mr. Carter's campaign manager, but a glance at the books of Mr. Carter's Presidential campaign strongly indicates that he sure taught somebody.)

Bert Lance's repeated implication that his hands were clean because he was a hick failed utterly to weigh against the evidence; in September, 1977, he suddenly found it advisable to stop talking about Calhoun and actually go there. He is in Calhoun yet, or at least they say he is; judging from the conspicuous lack of success my colleagues and I have had in laying eyes on him there, he might very well be playing a round of golf in Riyadh with his new Saudi Arabian friends. A visit to Calhoun has its compensations, but the pleasure of Bert Lance's conversation is not among them, although I was

nearly polited to death by the nice lady who answers his telephone. Judging from her spry and chipper tones, one would think that her employer was accused of nothing more serious than a bad umpiring call in a sandlot softball game, and she is not alone. In Calhoun, Georgia, they can't seem to figure out what all the fuss is about.

Lance's gifts to Calhoun have been considerable, and his most recent ones are not among the least. Thanks to the activities of Lance and his associates, the money in the First National Bank is as safe as if it were being guarded by the Comptroller of the Currency himself—in effect, it is being guarded by the Comptroller of the Currency himself; thanks to a sustained blitz by federal examiners, Calhoun First National is at present one of the soundest, best managed, and most conservative financial institutions this side of the West German treasury. And while Calhoun will never be a convention center, the regional hotel industry has experienced quite a little boomlet in the care and feeding of newspaper reporters and other jackals of the press who drift through, trying to figure out what the hell Bert Lance actually did.

If reports from the scene of the crime have been sparse, it is for an excellent reason—the same excellent reason that New York City is full of people from small towns who left them voluntarily. Although the perfectly decent people who live in Calhoun have been told that they are the backbone of the Republic until they have come to believe it, the backbone of the Republic is actually located elsewhere; events and personages in small towns take on a curious subaqueous quality of filtered light and muffled sound and distorted perspective, and even the most obvious and substantial things take on the insubstantiality of a dream. This can be very restful. It can also mean that a man can rob the bank and get away with it so long as he goes to church.

Bert's boomtown



ALTHOUGH LITTLE RESEMBLES the sleepy southern town of song and story; instead, it gives the impression that somebody knocked it cold years ago and it has never come to. Situated in a tumbled country of second-growth timber where the deep coastal plain begins to wrinkle on the knees of the Piedmont, it is the legal residence of 6,000 souls. Some 7,000 more live in the immediate vicinity, and they are all well concealed. Indeed, it is entirely possible to drive in one end of Calhoun and out the other without achieving any sense that you've actually been to the place. First comes a straggle of supermarkets and auto-supply stores and burger stands with homiletic epigrams on their marquees ("Trying times are the times for trying," "Don't pull tomor-

row's cloud over today's sunshine," that sort of thing), then U.S. 41 becomes Wall Street for a while, a few nondescript brick buildings slip past on the left, and Wall Street turns back into U.S. 41. First impressions are notoriously deceptive, but, like paranoia, they are also sometimes informative; Calhoun is largely invisible from the road because most of it is hidden up on a hill behind some trees, but even knowing that, one still finds it difficult to account for the near total absence of human and animal life. A cannonball, if fired down the principal canyon of trade on a recent morning, would have found its progress impeded only by a bemused northern journalist and a statue of an Indian. Calhoun is the site of New Echota, the last eastern capital of the Cherokee nation, where the legendary Sequoya perfected his alphabet. Shortly thereafter, the Cherokees left for Oklahoma, where they remain to this day.

As one might expect, Calhoun's undisputed nerve center is the First National Bank. It is a large structure, relatively new, and—along with a couple of windowless Southern Bell substations—one of the few buildings in town with any architectural pretension. It also has a sign that spells out messages. The

criminology buff will find in it little of interest; the locus of white-collar crime has a way of appearing entirely ordinary. In the case of the Calhoun First National Bank, this means that there is nobody there but the clerks.

Calhoun appears deserted because everyone in town is at work; by a curious paradox, Calhoun looks half-dead because it's booming with Bert Lance's boom, and every employable in town has hied himself down to the carpet mill. (At least the white ones have. I finally located the black ones in a small public-housing project down on the floodplain of the Oostanaula River, staring through the screen doors as though under orders to stay inside until an all-clear was sounded.) Although the imminent opening of a disposable-diaper factory and a cement-mixer plant are eagerly awaited events and Jack Carter's soybean silos are something of a tourist attraction, tufted carpets are the big news in Calhoun. More than eighty mills are in operation, and they're one of the main reasons the good citizens of Calhoun may someday add a statue of a portly fellow in a business suit to the little plaza in front of the library where the Indian stands. If the rest of the country rather fuzzily sees Bert Lance as a per-



son who seems to have used some other people's money without asking for it first, the Bert Lance known to Calhoun is the man who broke the lock on the vault at the bank and made prosperity come to town. And as far as they're concerned, anybody who lays a hand on him is no friend of theirs.

Northwest Georgia is the undisputed tufted-carpet capital of the known universe. The industry traces its origin to 1895, when a young Dalton woman named Catherine Evans sewed the first "candlestick" or chenille stitch of modern times while making a wedding bedspread for her sister. Whether she did this by accident or design is a matter that has never been cleared up, but in a twinkling a number of alert local entrepreneurs combined her discovery with the area's single greatest natural resource—hundreds and hundreds of desperately poor white people with time on their hands—and formed a shanty-based bedspread empire that took the country by storm. The social legislation of the New Deal pretty much put paid to that aspect of the undertaking, and those days are viewed with nostalgia now, the subject of lithographs in executive boardrooms depicting clean men in Model T's delivering yarn and patterns to dirty but overjoyed rural families clearly in the grip of some wasting disease. Piecework gave way to automation, bedspreads gave way to rugs, and the city of Dalton's 125 carpet millionaires now give it the air of a petroleum boomtown in the energy belt.

By a happy chance, running a carpet mill isn't at all difficult compared with running, say, a shipyard or a television station. The typical mill is housed in a huge prefabricated sheet-metal shed that can be bolted together rapidly with simple tools. The machinery, though deft, is uncomplicated, and the work itself is sufficiently light that much of it can be performed by nonunionized, modestly paid, unskilled women. The market for the finished product is perking along at a healthy clip, and a trained sales force can easily be obtained by means of raids upon one's competitors. All you need is money.

Money, as it happened, was in conspicuously short supply in Calhoun, although it was being coined a scant twenty miles away in Dalton. The reason for this sorry state of affairs is neither very complicated nor very obscure. For most of the first half of this century, small Georgia towns like Calhoun were traditionally dominated by two local institutions: the bank and the cotton mill. More often than not these enterprises were run by the town's two most powerful families or congeries of families. In Calhoun they came visibly together in the person of one man, old Mr. A. B. David, who was both president of the bank and a highly interested spectator in the fortunes of the Echota Cotton Mills. A pillar of the church and the community, he was also notoriously tight with a dollar in matters not pertaining to his immediate family. "Before Bert came into that bank," says Clarence Harris, a successful carpet manufacturer,

"it was difficult if not impossible to get any money out of it. Back in the Fifties they wouldn't even give me \$300 to establish a credit rating." It is relatively easy to control a town when only a chosen few are rich. It is extremely hard to control a town when lots of people are making lots of money. They tend to have their own ideas about how things ought to run.



ERT LANCE didn't marry the banker's daughter. He married LaBelle David, the banker's granddaughter. One of the problems with writing down much of the Bert Lance story is that it's corny; he really lived the American Dream, and in the end it destroyed him. Born in 1931, the son of an educator who served as president of Young Harris College and later as superintendent of the Calhoun school system, Lance was by all accounts the sort of plucky, cheerful, industrious youth who otherwise dwells exclusively in the early pages of a tycoon's ghost-written memoirs. He supplemented the family income with a multitude of odd jobs while keeping well up with his schoolwork and participating in a full schedule of boyish activities of which he was inevitably the spark plug—indeed, though he never seemed to sleep, his disposition never soured.

Mind you, I don't believe for an instant that Bert Lance, Perfect Youth, ever existed, but this is the image his neighbors choose to project and, in large measure, believe. They're trying to make a case, of course, rallying to his defense, circling the wagons, rebutting charges they neither understand nor believe. Lance as a person has an odd way of disappearing entirely from their talk, becoming a sort of self-propelled abstraction of everything the North does to the South, everything cities do to small towns, everything intellectuals and foreigners do to Americans with high-school educations. Listening to his elders and contemporaries, one catches a persistent unwitting echo of Conrad's Marlow: he was one of us and that's why you hate him, he was one of us, only he was better. All his life, Bert Lance has been a stand-in for fantasy. It is an edged gift. A clever man will use it. A cunning man will exploit it. But it is vital that fantasy's surrogate never, never begin to believe it himself, or it will turn in his hand.

Every age shapes its preferred scenario for its golden lads, and we are dealing with the 1950s. Lance proceeded on to college, first Emory and later the University of Georgia, but he also married LaBelle David, fathered a child, and fell directly into the place old Mr. David had prepared for him at the bank, neatly and inevitably. In a way, it was a fortunate meeting of congruent needs: Lance needed a job, which he all too easily got, and Mr. David, whose own offspring had an aptitude for spending money, found a successor.

In 1963, at the age of thirty-two, Bert Lance became the youngest bank president in the state of Georgia.

The prime entrepreneur



HE CALHOUN FIRST NATIONAL under Lance's stewardship has been characterized as the quintessential good-ole-boy bank, where the loan officer would hand you a stack of bills on the strength of your signature if he knew your daddy—an impression abetted by Lance's later assertion that his loan policies were influenced by the way the prospective borrower maintained his lawn. In fact, it was nothing of the sort; Bert Lance more than lived up to his advance billing, and everything he touched turned to gold. As he consolidated his control over the bank he began to put its money at risk, using it as a source of venture capital. While this in no way resembles the way Chase Manhattan does business (as the acting Comptroller of the Currency later remarked with some heat), it bears a convincing resemblance to the policies advocated by a man Lance may never have heard of: John Maynard Keynes. Like any good Keynesian, Lance was combating slack times by loosening up the money supply, and it worked. The carpet mills came in—money machines themselves, as long as the market holds up—and Calhoun's economy took off; for a town of its size, it has a simply enormous amount of industry, most of it new.

At the same time, unremarked upon and probably unnoticed by anyone, including Lance, something else had happened. In violating orthodox banking practice for the benefit of the local economy, Bert Lance had begun to act as though the money in the bank were his own, to dispose of as he wished.

"He saw the big picture a lot more than some of us do," said Sam C. Smith, the president of the Bartow County Bank down in Cartersville. The Bartow County Bank, like the Calhoun First National, is a new and spacious structure, and Mr. Smith shares something of Lance's reputation for aggressive, imaginative, and civic-minded banking. He can't figure out what Bert Lance did wrong either. "He just didn't pay a whole lot of attention to the details, that's all. Sure, he made a profit. He was crazy not to become the prime entrepreneur of north Georgia if he could, but I think he believed in all sincerity that what he did was good for the community. My stockholders would nail my hide to the wall if I so much as tried some of those things. You know, all banks like to be called full-service banks, but Bert, he goes out and he buys about two high-bred bull cows and leases them to the farmers. Then he made a big joke about being a bull-service bank.

Hell, I seem to recall he even ran a cattle auction out of there once."

I was already well up on the bull cow situation, having been prepped on the subject across the width of South Carolina by an old man in the dining car of the Southern Crescent. Indeed, Lance's bulls appear to have struck a responsive chord in the southern imagination. His concern for the well-being of the small family farm echoed a popular and almost mystical regional concern. It had less to do with banking than with social policy, and it was at once entirely genuine and unusually informed: Bert Lance grew up next door to Dean Hayes, the gifted agricultural scientist who led Gordon County and the Coosa Valley from a hopeless cotton culture to grassland cattle farming. It was at a regional planning meeting, where the policies of this remarkable man were discussed, that Lance first met a young state senator named Jimmy Carter.

It is possible that Calhoun's development might have happened anyway, without Lance, although perhaps not as rapidly. National industry may be moving from north to south, but in Georgia it is moving from south to north, away from Atlanta and up into the Piedmont. And it is equally true, as Lance eventually discovered, that orthodox, conservative banking practices are not based on whimsy. Placing a bank's capital at risk means that a number of bad loans are inevitably going to get written. In a small country bank like Calhoun, with poor in-



George Gardner

terior controls and an unfortunate habit of accepting its borrowers' word at face value, the situation could become difficult, especially when it turns out that many of the loans being written by the president were peculiar by any standard and that many of the loans written by the agricultural-loan officer, Billy Lee Campbell, were finding their way into his pocket. The loan-loss reserve was inadequate, and the bank's liquidity position was weak—in September, 1973, it officially amounted to only 9.1 percent of net deposits and short-term liabilities, and even this was an overstatement. The bank was audited by the Comptroller's office monthly in 1969 and 1970 and again in 1974 and 1975. Finally, on December 2, 1975, the bank entered into an agreement.

An agreement with the Comptroller's office is one cut below a cease-and-desist order and functions in much the same way, but without the element of legal coercion—the Comptroller and his examiners badly want some things straightened out, and the bank agrees to do so. It is an extreme step and many things are involved in it, but one thing is not. There is no publicity. To protect the reputation of the banking community in general and of the offending bank in particular, the agreement is entered into and carried out under what amounts to a news blackout. As far as the public is concerned, everything is fine.



ON THE SURFACE, then, Bert Lance moved from strength to strength. His hometown boomed, and he himself became conspicuously prosperous. It is an interesting commentary on the hypnotic quality of the American Dream that

nobody questioned where his money was coming from. If one of his tellers had suddenly blossomed forth with a snazzy car, an acreage on the edge of town, and an eight-track stereo, that teller would doubtless come in for some close scrutiny, but Bert Lance was able to acquire an airplane and a farm and the accoutrements of wealth without anyone turning a hair. Just as generals are considered synonymous with their armies, so high corporate officers are considered synonymous with their corporations; as the one prospers, the other prospers also. A weird reversal of common sense occurs: to wit, if the bank president turns up rich, the bank must be doing pretty well. It does not appear to have occurred to anyone in Calhoun that the bank president was paid a salary, and that this salary was of a fixed and discoverable amount, susceptible to the analysis of every citizen who ever bought a load of groceries. There was never a hint, a whisper, or a suspicion that the depositors might have been well advised to keep their money in the family mattress.

When Jimmy Carter became governor, Lance followed him to Atlanta as state commissioner of

transportation and did a tremendous job of rooting out corruption in the highway department. In 1974 Lance himself stood for governor and lost. It seemed like nothing but a temporary setback; later that same year he was approached by Atlanta's National Bank of Georgia, and in January of 1975 he became its president and chief operating officer, moving up to the chairmanship of the board at Calhoun.

It is understood that a man in his mid-forties will have served his apprenticeship and be poised to make his big move, which is exactly what Lance proceeded to do with typical vim. Without pausing to train the bank's staff, he proceeded to expand NBG's activities to cover the entire state. He tried to branch out into international banking. He moved into agricultural commodities, lending money to Carter's peanut business and boasting about it in his annual report under the heading "NBG Goes Nuts." His trust department attracted an \$18-million deposit from the Teamsters Union, an event that has led to much interested but so far fruitless speculation. Using the bank's airplane in a way that would later bring cries of delighted outrage from the Republicans, he seemed to be everywhere at once. NBG's deposits increased by 50 percent and its assets rose from \$254 million to \$404 million. But he was going too fast and spreading the bank too thin. The collapse of the Atlanta real estate market had devastating effects on the bank's loan portfolio, Lance himself made the situation worse by transferring his relatives' funny loans down from Calhoun, and by 1978 NBG was also in trouble with the Comptroller of the Currency.

That much is common knowledge, and it is on these slender but indisputable facts that Lance and his defenders base their defense. I have little doubt that Lance's protestations of innocence are entirely genuine. I have equally little doubt that his utterance gains its confidence and force only because Lance has not yet realized that he is a badly bewildered man. In part this is due to the nature of white-collar crime. In much larger part it is due to the tragic fact that Bert Lance is a tabula rasa on which the economic sins of his generation have been graven.

A fiduciary *War and Peace*



HITE-COLLAR CRIME is one of the easiest to commit and most difficult to prove, largely because there is little apparent difference between an indictable act and a shrewd but entirely legal business practice. Moreover, there is little drama in it; no gaping wounds cry out for vengeance, no widows and orphans are cast into the streets to beg their bread, and the losses (if any)

are usually covered by tax write-offs and insurance payments. The perpetrator is often a splendid fellow, while the victim is usually large and impersonally corporate and unlikely to command much in the way of popular sympathy. In the mind of conservative and liberal alike there lurks the suspicion that property per se is a form of theft and its acquisition a form of burglary in a moral vacuum, so the white-collar criminal is merely stealing from a thief. This delusion is a useful one, especially as it pertains to juries.

Second, it is entirely possible that Bert Lance has only a hazy idea of what he did. When a typical crook—even a white-collar one—sets out to steal a million dollars, he does so in terms of a plan that is relatively simple and easily held in the mind. Details may multiply, and he may add refinements as the occasion warrants, but there is about the whole an elegant symmetry. He starts with point A—not having a million dollars—and proceeds by stages to point B—having a million dollars. In the matter of T. Bertram Lance, however, we are confronted with a complexity that borders on chaos—which does much to account for the rather fuzzy impression in the minds of the public and the press that if he's guilty of anything he's guilty of treating the Calhoun First National like a slum tenement building, with himself in the role of landlord. Even the redoubtable members of the Senate's Governmental Affairs Committee, with a large staff of aides at their disposal, seized upon the comparatively trivial matter of Lance's airplane and his bank-subsidized trips to football games and the Mardi Gras, not merely because the airplane was a convenient target for Senatorial fulminations, but because it was a simple object that took off from one clearly defined place, landed in another, and was thus comprehensible.

Another thing that may have clouded the perception of the public servants was that Bert Lance was one of *them*, too. When it came to borrowing and spending other people's money, he behaved not unlike the United States Congress. Bert Lance was the hedgehog who knows one big thing. The only money that is real is the money in your pocket. All other money, though useful, is fictitious. And so, like the

United States Congress, he went on a spree.

The Calhoun First National wasn't in the least like a slum tenement. Nor was it like a credit card—another tempting but misleading analogy that has appeared in the press. Rent rolls and credit cards are finite, but in the American banking system, Bert Lance discovered the Philosopher's Stone.

His claim that he wrote it all down is not correct, but he did indeed write most of it down. There are a couple of good reasons for this. One is that an honest man has nothing to hide, and Bert Lance's conviction of his own honesty is as inseparable from his person as his nose and his foot. Moreover, he can prove it: not only did he write most of it down (after all, everyone has something to hide), but his depositors didn't lose a cent. But there is a second and highly practical reason for all the meticulous record-keeping. Computers and bookkeepers are alike in that they know only what you tell them, but to complete your transactions they must be furnished with precise and accurate information. Furthermore, because many of Lance's transactions involved debts that were supposed to be repaid someday and because they were conducted through the medium of banks that need to know the status of their money, this information had to be stored and be retrievable. (But not all of it. Bookkeepers and computers share another, similar quality: if you decide not to tell them something, they don't know it. It is a mechanical flaw they hold in common with bank examiners. If one doesn't look in a file, he will have little idea of what it contains.)


Because the information was thus compiled and stored, it eventually found its way into the public record, and it reposes there still. The public record in question consists of five volumes issued by the Government Printing Office, bound in green paper and containing a flood of testimony, reams of photocopied bank statements, memorandums, letters, facsimiles of canceled checks, bank examiners' reports, interviews by the Senate staff and the investigative branch of the Internal Revenue Service, news stories, the relevant columns by William Safire, representative samples of the Manufacturers Han-



Wide World Photos

over Trust Company's newsletter, deeds of property, transaction reports, and the list of allegations eventually brought by the Comptroller and the Securities and Exchange Commission. It is, in short, a sort of fiduciary *War and Peace* made up of facts, informed speculation, a number of outright lies, and a staggering amount of worthless garbage. I suppose it is a wonderful thing that we have so much information available to us in this free land: the rub comes when you try to sift through it and find out what it all means. Sherlock Holmes once remarked that a bankbook is a compressed diary. Holmes was right as usual, but he was engaged in the relatively straightforward case of a noble spinster who ended up chloroformed in the false bottom of a coffin. There are enough bankbooks in the public record to fill the library at Alexandria. Properly winnowed, they afford a fascinating peep into the financial portion of Bert Lance's mind, but the proper winnowing takes time, and the final result yields none of those spectacular revaluations of the "this is a stickup," variety so beloved by the watchdogs of the public weal—which does much to explain why the watchdogs of the public weal seem to have had such a hard time understanding the sins of Bert Lance, much less explaining them. What emerges is a picture not of a man stealing money but of a man solving problems in highly inventive, possibly illegal ways. Certainly they were unwise. But they worked. And there is a discernible pattern.

A credit to his family




IT TOOK ME three months—two months to wade through the material and a month to make sense of it—and the gist of what I discovered is this: in America, it is expected that a rich man will owe a large sum of money. From this it is but a single step to assuming that a man's indebtedness reflects his wealth: if someone owes his creditors a sum equivalent to the gross national product of the Republic of Chad, it is logical if not correct to assume that he has either the cash or the assets to discharge his obligations. If some of these loans are being paid with other, new loans, a curious thing happens: as long as a man is able to move his funds around smoothly, he will have an excellent credit rating. Never mind that the funds so pledged and used exist largely on paper or that the collateral is purchased with borrowed money, often the very money of the loan in question, which causes both loan and collateral to function something like a giant Möbius strip—in these matters, appearance is reality.

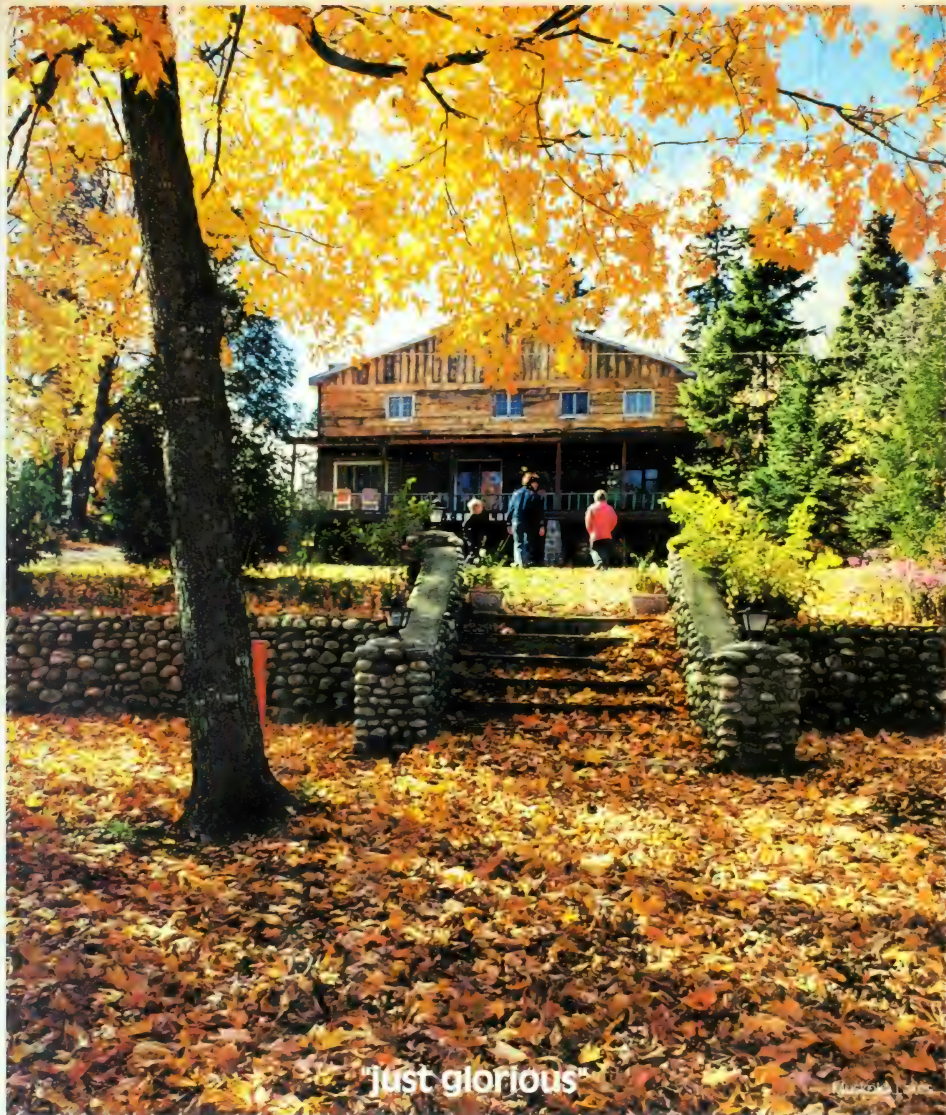
In other words, credit is stupid (as love is blind), and a lending institution is the easiest thing in the world to keep happy: all you have to do is pay it.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that this payment is made in the form of numbers rather than bullion and specie, a circumstance that holds out the possibility of many ingenious and lucrative refinements—but the American credit system is a rich lode even when exploited crudely. It is probable that Lance first began to learn of the fictitious nature of money when he discovered that he'd married not only LaBelle, but LaBelle's grandpa's bank and LaBelle's family. Although the members of the latter doubtless have many sterling qualities, commercial ability is not among them. If old Mr. David had a flaw, it was one of selective thrift: the man who wouldn't lend a young carpet manufacturer \$300 to establish a line of credit was also a parent indulgent to such a degree that his offspring and their children got some very peculiar ideas about where money comes from. If the younger Davids wanted something—a car is one example that sticks in the mind—they simply wrote a check for it. The check was invariably good. By the time the third generation rolled around, this miracle had lost its luster and become common practice, like electricity.

Here one sees the national character at work again: the Davids are a microcosm of the estrangement that has recently occurred between the workman and his hire. It isn't the Davids' fault that they didn't excel at gainful work, but they expected nevertheless to be able to maintain a comfortable middle-class life-style that they weren't earning. A middle-class life-style has become something of a national birthright, and the Davids' unquestioning acceptance of one based on easy access to a bank full of other people's money is no more unreasonable than a garbage man's unshakable conviction that he deserves to make as much money as an architect.




OM B. DAVID, LaBelle's uncle, after whom the local airport is named, was the most solvent of the lot—a relative statement if there ever was one. Although he served as chairman of the executive committee at the Calhoun bank and drew an executive salary, he and his wife consistently overdrew their two checking accounts until, in March, 1975, the overdrafts exceeded \$230,000. That same month, Lance arranged for NBG to loan Mr. David the coincidental sum of \$230,000. The stated purpose of the loan was to provide money for investment. In actuality, it was used to pay down the overdraft at Calhoun. Borrowing money with inadequate collateral (or none) and using it for a purpose not stated in the relevant documentation are features common to many Lance-related loans, and when the loans involved his wife's family, he took care to make sure that his name would appear nowhere in the pertinent files at NBG.



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Because Mr. David has an income, his repayment of the NBG loan has been prompt and reliable. But the best thing that can be said about the rest of LaBelle's kinfolk is that having a bank president in the family is preferable to going on welfare. Starting no later than 1967 and continuing throughout his tenure, Lance arranged for Calhoun to, in effect, give his in-laws hundreds of thousands of dollars in the form of overdrafts and loans. It was almost as though they were his children and he was giving them an allowance; although he had no written power of attorney from any of them, he exercised substantial control over their financial affairs; he juggled their books without telling them about it, and he caused money to appear in their accounts as though by magic. From some time in 1968 until November, 1974, he arranged for loans totaling \$180,320 to be placed at the disposal of his brother-in-law, Beverly Banks David, although the money was only partially secured and B. B. David couldn't possibly have repaid it. Instead, the payments were made through a special account that Lance established in B. B. David's name, and that eventually became overdrawn to the tune of \$18,018. Practicing the kind of hall-of-mirrors economics that soon became second nature to him, Lance frequently paid down the overdraft by means of new loans, while the overdraft itself had been created by having to pay down previous loans. B. B. David's living expenses were covered by a joint account that was likewise almost continually overdrawn and replenished with loans. The overdraft on this account eventually reached \$55,383. Following B. B. David's suicide in 1974, both accounts were closed with a loan of \$75,000 from the Citizens and Southern Bank, where Lance enjoyed influence.

Claude Barker David, another of Lance's brothers-in-law, tried his hand at this and that, but fortune did not smile on him. David's Gifts and Antiques, an enterprise that he ran out of his home until 1969, failed to flourish. C. B. David then founded a construction company. It must have seemed like a good idea; Bert's boom was just hitting its stride, and the new carpet magnates were beginning to erect numbers of large, uninteresting homes on the crest of the hill, but for some reason the David Construction Company failed to get a piece of the action. From 1971 to 1974, C. B. David and his wife were out of work. Then they took over Barker's Flower House and ran it until 1977, but they were unable to generate enough income to cover their living expenses. In the real world, such a situation usually ends with the hapless pair throwing themselves on the mercy of their family or becoming wards of the state, but we are dealing with Calhoun, where they became wards of the bank instead.

Between 1967 and 1970, Lance arranged for Calhoun to extend personal loans totaling approximately \$113,000. Between 1968 and 1969, David's Gifts and Antiques received an additional \$32,000, and

approximately \$109,000 went to the David Construction Company in 1970. While the loans remained at Calhoun, the interest was frequently paid through one or more of five checking accounts, four of them managed by Rita David, C. B. David's wife. The fifth, a special account, was opened by Lance in C. B. David's name but without C. B. David's knowledge. Lance neglected to send him any of its financial statements—something that, under the circumstances, seems like an excess of tact. All five accounts were chronically overdrawn, the total reaching a sum well over \$100,000 in 1975. In addition to the interest payments to Calhoun, the money went to pay interest on some non-Calhoun loans and to subsidize Mr. and Mrs. David's life-style. An additional \$40,000 went into the refurbishing of Eagle's Nest, a cottage on Lance's farm. It was the least they could do for him, all things considered.

During 1975 and 1976, Lance covered the interest checks with his own money, and the overdrafts on three of the accounts were eliminated on paper by a further infusion of his money combined with transfers from the other C. B. David accounts, an \$80,000 loan to Rita David from the Northwest Georgia Bank at Ringgold, and \$66,000 from a \$100,000 loan to Ruth Chance, Lance's mother-in-law, from that same institution. This last loan came as something of a surprise to Mrs. Chance when it was called to her attention in 1977. Lance had control of her affairs, too. The remaining \$34,000 of the Ringgold loan went to cover overdrafts in her account. Mrs. Chance had no significant source of income.

She did, however, have a husband, Ronald F. Chance, who wanders into the story briefly on February 7, 1977. On that date he appeared at the main office of the National Bank of Georgia with the news that his stepson-in-law had arranged for him to borrow \$125,000. Although Mr. Chance couldn't remember the name of the loan officer he was supposed to see, NBG gave him the money anyway. It was used to pay off a loan at the Cohutta Banking Company in Chatsworth, an institution that, like Northwest Georgia in Ringgold, numbered among its major shareholders Lance and his associates. The Cohutta loan had been used to pay off a loan at Calhoun that had met with the Comptroller's disapproval. Unfortunately, Mr. Chance turned out not to have \$125,000 when the NBG loan reached maturity, and he was compelled to sell 43.8 acres of his land to the Georgia Department of Transportation, by coincidence the very agency Lance had purged and reorganized during his tenure as its chief.

In May, 1977, also in response to the Comptroller's criticism, Mrs. Chance's Calhoun indebtedness was transferred to NBG; the indebtedness totaled \$126,225, and it was accompanied by the proviso that Calhoun would buy it back later. That same

month, \$114,550 of C. B. David's debts made a similar suggestion. On December 29, 1970, following the sale of real estate, a write-off of \$15,000, and two payments, a balance of \$104,540 remained outstanding with no likelihood of repayment short of the total liquidation of C. B. David's assets. If the Comptroller's men hadn't tracked the money down, it is possible that no payments whatever would have been made, nor would any property have been sold. Lance has since promised to pay down Mr. Chance's debt with quarterly installments of \$5,000 plus interest, and he has hired C. B. David as his office manager.

Told the Comptroller's office finally immobilized it and demanded repayment, all this money had a strange dual nature. It existed, and at the same time it didn't. That is, it existed in the sense that LaBelle's relatives spent it, and it didn't exist in the sense that it was nothing but numbers on the books at Calhoun—numbers that waned and waxed in response to the addition and subtraction of other numbers, but that never came home to rest. In examining his in-laws, Lance juggled. Still, what we encounter here is exactly the individual evidence of a criminal intellect: we encounter the maneuvers of a nice guy with a brood of repulsive in-laws, a nice guy who once again just happens to be acting as though the assets of his bank represented his personal fortune. It was both his mind and his inheritance. When he stepped into old Mr. David's shoes, he acquired old Mr. David's personal ob-

ligations and old Mr. David's way of meeting them, and his options at the beginning were precisely two: he could stop using the bank to support the Davids and trust to luck (i.e., that the crows would feed LaBelle's kinfolk and the foxes pay their rent), or he could continue as before. Continuity had one great advantage. It worked. And the lessons it taught could be applied in many ways.

In September, 1974, Calhoun loaned Lance's son, David, \$45,000 on a demand basis. David Lance was nineteen years old. The following year he increased his indebtedness to \$99,236. On the various occasions when the young man found himself unable to meet the interest payments on this stupendous sum, his father made them for him. One wonders why. David Lance had plenty of spending money. During 1974 and 1975, his monthly overdrafts ran as high as \$11,000.

Playing Ping-Pong



IT IS EASY, in retrospect, to take the moral high ground and accuse Lance and his retinue of simple greed or, at best, the sort of bloody-minded euphoria that characterized the German submarines during the "Happy Time" of 1940

and 1941, but this is to forget context. The Calhoun bank had been a closed proposition for a long, long time, and Bert Lance was a splendid fellow. It takes money to make money, after all, and with certain modifications the method used to keep the Davids fed and clothed could be used for the benefit of all. First, however, it was necessary to secure the bank itself by making its books look as good as possible, but the loan Ping-Ponging that maintained the Davids suggested a way in which this might be done; otherwise, the conservative men and women in the Comptroller's corps of examiners might well put a severe crimp in Lance's plans.

Therefore, between June, 1970, and December, 1974, Calhoun put its entire installment loan portfolio to ransom and obtained \$3 million from the Fulton National Bank in Atlanta—a sum that was later increased to \$5 million. The loan was represented as a sale of loan participations, but it was nothing of the sort: it simply served to deceive the examiners about the bank's liquidity, and Calhoun's obligation to pay off the debt was nowhere reflected in its books. By means of an identical understanding, it borrowed \$700,000 from the National Bank and Trust Company of Chattanooga in January, 1970, \$825,000 in February, and \$825,000 in March. In December, 1970, Calhoun obtained \$500,000 from the First National Bank of Rome, Georgia, and in December, 1971, it received \$1 million. Since all these moneys were returned to their source after a few days, during which they



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Lance's home in the Georgetown section of Washington, D.C.

fooled the examiners, for all practical purposes they had no existence except on paper. The Fulton loan was finally paid back in January, 1975. It was just numbers, too.

With the Comptroller's office thus successfully bamboozled with fictitious money and a Ping-Ponging network established, it became possible for a well-connected customer to obtain money from Calhoun no matter what the actual effect on the bank's liquidity, especially if the well-connected customer also happened to be a director of the bank. The loans could always be farmed out to other banks at the end of the year and repurchased later, when the coast was clear. In this manner, among the loans granted to a tire dealership, a manufacturer of small rugs and bedspreads, and a carpet and yarn dye factory, all affiliated with Calhoun directors, were loans or loan renewals totaling \$1.15 million. Of this sum, \$810,000 was temporarily transferred to friendly banks and not recorded as a Calhoun liability. It was all in a good cause, the furtherance of Bert's boom.

And, yes, Bert was crazy not to become the prime entrepreneur of north Georgia if he could. He also didn't have to. He had the bank. Lance and his wife maintained four accounts there: Lance's regular and special accounts, LaBelle Lance's special account, and the account of Lancelot and Company, a partnership owned by and consisting of Lance and his wife. Lance controlled all four accounts and used them interchangeably. Still, Lance held off; both habits and delusions take a while to form, and it wasn't until 1972, when his experience with loan manipulation seemed to prove the bank's capacity to generate any reasonable sum of money, that the overdrafts began. Like all good leaders, Lance made certain that the troops were served and the position was secure before sitting down to dinner himself. The overdrafts in his own accounts and in that of Lancelot were relatively modest, peaking in the \$20,000-\$30,000 range. The overdrafts in the LaBelle Lance account were somewhat more ambitious, finally reaching \$110,000 in November, 1974, the year Lance ran for governor. The interesting thing about these figures is that, like Poe's purloined letter, they are so ordinary in the context in which Lance was then operating that they become invisible. Lance was rich and nobody cared. In 1974, Bert Lance's salary at the Calhoun First National Bank was \$37,900. He received an additional \$4,750 in directors' fees.

Lance was a generous man. If a good thing seemed to do no harm, he let everybody do it. In 1974, Calhoun's extensions of credit to its officers, directors, and director nominees amounted to 43.44 percent of the bank's total equity capital. In 1975, the figure rose to 73.08 percent. Based on the information supplied by the bank, the SEC was unable to determine whether these lines of credit included overdrafts or whether the overdrafts should be

added to these figures, thereby reducing even further the bank's liquidity position.

Lance moved to NBG in 1975. That was also the year when the agreement with the Comptroller's office seemingly halted the overdrafts. But it was as though Lance couldn't stop himself. Although it appears to make no sense at all, Lance arranged matters so that he was able to foil the examiners and write, between January, 1976, and August, 1977, 1,146 checks totaling \$2,058,721. Each check would have created an overdraft in his Calhoun account, had the posting of the checks not been delayed a day in order to allow sufficient funds to be transferred from his NBG account—funds that were themselves largely illusory, consisting as they did of the proceeds from his many loans.

During some of this time he was the second most powerful man in the federal government.

Campaigns and computers



ALTHOUGH LANCE'S OVERDRAFTS provided him with ready cash for living expenses, loan payments, and margin calls on various securities, it was not the best of the many ways a bank could be used for profit and good works. Lance was learning all the time. With the bank's help, you could even run for governor. During the course of Lance's abortive run in 1974, his campaign committees wrote (and the bank cleared) more than 625 hot checks in at least two accounts. At least ten of them, intrinsically worthless though they were, found their way straight back to Calhoun in the form of payments to reimburse the bank for the airplane rental, computer equipment, and staff salaries the bank generously provided, disguised on its books as building maintenance, bank computer forms, and equipment rental. The deficit created in the bank's books by these shenanigans was then washed out, like the drawing on a child's magic slate, before the annual accounting was presented to the stockholders.

A federal statute, 18 USC 610 (since repealed), quite clearly states that it is unlawful for any national bank to make an expenditure, loan, or advance in connection with any election. Paying for an airplane, computer equipment, and campaign workers is an advance. Accepting payment for these things with hot checks constitutes an expenditure. Hot checks themselves are a loan until they are written off, at which point they, too, become an expenditure. Statute 18 USC 610, like Lance's use of bank aircraft, has the virtue of being clear and straightforward and was consequently the focus of considerable Republican uproar when the Senate began looking into his affairs. Because of its unambiguous nature and because a violation con-

stitutes damage to the public weal, 18 USC 610 was perhaps the most damaging and prosecutable of the many things Lance has been charged with. Unfortunately, the statute of limitations under this law runs only three years. Although Lance's activities were the subject of two grand jury investigations stretching over months and the language of the resulting indictments is almost identical to that contained in a report published by the SEC and the Comptroller's office as long ago as May, 1978, in which the campaign irregularities were clearly spelled out, 18 USC 610 was allowed to expire before Lance could be charged under it.

There are other ways of raising campaign money, and Lance's experience with the Lancelot Company suggested at least one way in which this might be done. With two of his friends and co-indictees, Thomas Mitchell and a Calhoun druggist named Jack Mullins, Lance formed the L & M Company, a partnership designed to pay off campaign debts by means of security and commodity investments. Naturally enough, L & M did its banking business at Calhoun, and during 1975 and 1976, also naturally enough, its account was overdrawn for months at a time, the figure at one point reaching approximately \$45,000. Some of the money was expended on the stocks and the commodities, but the rest was used to pay down campaign loans and should be added to the \$245,478.26 (the aggregate overdraft highs of the campaign committee's three accounts) as part of the bank's advances, both during the campaign and afterward.

In addition, L & M obtained \$60,000 in the form of a loan to Mullins from the First State Bank of Gilmer County, \$13,000 of which was transferred to Lance to pay down the committee overdrafts. The Lancelot Company acquired \$100,000 from the same bank for the same purpose, and a final \$40,000 came from Gilmer as a loan paid directly to Mullins, who in turn gave it directly to Lance.

Jack Mullins was a good friend, and his expressed enthusiasm for a constitutional amendment that would forbid reporters from finding out things is understandable and justified. On November 3, 1975, Lance arranged for him to receive \$40,000 on an unsecured basis from NBG to make personal investments. The money went to cover the L & M overdrafts at Calhoun. Mullins later obtained another Calhoun loan to purchase from the same bank 875 shares held by two charitable institutions and a trustee for a hospital. Lance had previously donated these shares while he was state transportation commissioner, in keeping with his public promise to give the equivalent of his salary from that post to good causes. In November, 1976, NBG loaned Mullins an additional \$185,715, of which approximately \$50,750 was used to consolidate the previous three loans while the remainder went to pay off more than \$130,000 in loans from Calhoun. Mullins had an income of less than \$25,000 a year. A number

of his interest payments were made by donations from Lance, funneled through L & M. In 1978, at the Comptroller's insistence, Mullins sold his coin collection and a number of stocks and paid NBG \$74,038.

Mullins had told NBG that the purpose of the loans was to buy coins and stock, and he overstated his net worth—small tricks of the trade that he either learned from Bert Lance or intuited. Borrowing money under false pretenses and asserting phantom assets are somewhat crude devices, however, and at NBG Lance was dealing with an institution far more porous than the one at Calhoun. NBG was much larger, much less susceptible to his total personal control, and a nervous employee or stockholder could cause no end of inconvenience. Mullins's loans, therefore, were secured in a third way, as were the loans to Tom B. and C. B. David, Ruth and Ronald Chance, and various Calhoun officers, including Lance's successor, Y. A. Henderson. In granting them the money, NBG took into consideration Calhoun's correspondent balance.



CORRESPONDENT BALANCES are monies banks keep on deposit at other, friendly banks. The use of these sizable sums is intended to compensate the depository for services rendered to the depositor—clearing customer checks, foreign-exchange trading, debt collection, the use of wire and computer services, and the training of officers in areas where the depository bank has greater expertise, among others. When an individual borrows a large amount of money from a bank, he is likewise often asked to make a substantial deposit, called a compensating balance. This money provides the bank with an additional source of income over and above the interest on the loan, and it serves as an earnest of the borrower's solvency and his determination to repay his debt. Although the practice is strictly forbidden, it goes without saying that if a comparatively insolvent borrower can somehow find a way to substitute a bank's correspondent balance for a personal compensating balance that he can't afford, the bank may very well discover a hitherto unsuspected willingness to part with gratifying quantities of cash. And if an ostensibly solvent borrower can work the same trick, he will end up with all that much more disposable capital.

The trouble was, Calhoun's correspondent balances were based on an asset structure that was to a significant extent the figment of a computer's imagination. A correspondent balance is not conveyed to its point of deposit by burly, trustworthy men carrying bags of specie. Thanks to a miracle of modern electronics, numbers are deducted at the first institution and added to other numbers at the second. While this commendably speedy practice

nables banks to communicate with the velocity of light, it has a built-in flaw: because a computer is incapable of lying, it is assumed that the numbers are truthful. In other words, the computer is treated much like a person of unquestionable rectitude and probity. That's absolutely crazy; a computer isn't trustworthy, it's an idiot savant, trusting and dumb and possessed of a prodigious memory.

Computers are programmed by people. People are very complicated. They forget things, and they lie.

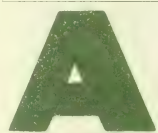
Calhoun's books were bolstered by upwards of \$5 million in nonexistent assets. Between half and three-quarters of its equity capital was on loan to its officers. The president's in-laws had run up hundreds of thousands of dollars in bad debts that were being kept alive with hot checks that created overdrafts that were covered with further loans. Millions of dollars in other loans were simply being stored elsewhere, in disguise. Lance's campaign committees were drinking deeply at the well, and so was Lance himself. The numbers on Calhoun's books were just that: numbers, reflecting nothing that existed, and when they were moved around in the form of correspondent balances, the traffic consisted in large part of fairy gold. The recipient institution received an assumption, and the assumption was wrong.

They were nonetheless numbers with singular power. Watered though Calhoun's correspondent balances were, they functioned much like flogiston and caloric, hypothetical and purely apocryphal substances that produced an effect that was real. For example, they made it possible to buy some banks.

In 1972, using Calhoun's correspondent balance to obtain personal loans at Fulton National, Lance and four Calhoun directors purchased 25 percent of the outstanding shares of Cohutta, the bank that was later so accommodating to Lance's father-in-law. The following year they added a partner and used the same method to buy a controlling interest in Northwest Georgia at Ringgold. Richard Carr, another of Lance's co-indictees, moved there as its president. In order to qualify for membership on the board of directors, he bought 200 shares of the stock from Henderson, acquiring the \$12,000 purchase price by means of an unsecured demand note

at Calhoun; as usual, no purpose for the loan was given. By October, 1974, Carr's Calhoun indebtedness had risen to more than \$120,000, on none of which had he paid down a penny of principal. Carr then began to borrow from NBG, where Lance, always happy to oblige his friends and associates, had providentially been installed as president. Carr began with a \$67,500 no-purpose loan in April, 1975, and used the proceeds to open a correspondent account. By February, 1976, Carr's NBG indebtedness had reached \$122,747 and he had attracted the Comptroller's attention both there and at Calhoun. It was a simple matter, however, for NBG to arrange for Citizens and Southern to loan Carr \$250,000, with which he was able to wipe the slate clean. NBG rewarded C&S by opening a correspondent account, agreed to reloan Carr enough money within a year to pay off his debt, and did so. In January, 1979, under pressure from the Comptroller, NBG discovered that Carr's financial statement had failed to list \$204,000 in additional debts, and that a farm listed as a \$195,000 asset was actually owned by Carr's wife and her mother. His collateral consisted of 8,035 shares of Northwest Georgia stock and a second mortgage on his home. NBG was unable to sell either the stock or the house, and Carr was unable to service his loan.

Dead Sea fruit



ALL THIS looks pretty stupid in retrospect, but as long as Bert Lance was still in control and not under investigation, it worked well. The question of how far he had moved into the realm of fantasy is probably moot as far as the law is concerned, but the indications are that he was far gone. He was clearly aware that tampering with the books at Calhoun, loaning the Davids large sums, and using the bank to run for governor were highly questionable practices, and he took appropriate precautions; a man who takes precautions usually has a fair idea of what he's do-



Wide World Photos

ing, even if his motives are good. But elsewhere he encouraged or allowed Mullins and Carr to take appalling risks (Mitchell, a careful man, is something of an enigma), and he took appalling risks himself. Loan roll-overs and Ping-Ponging became his standard manner of conducting his personal business; he was careless when it came to details. His rationalizations are easy to imagine. Because it was aboveboard, it must have been honest. Because he was a poor detail man, any slip could be excused as a mistake. Because his credit was good and the roll-overs remained easy, everybody further down the line got paid, although the snowball kept getting larger. The money kept coming in. It was business.

Using Calhoun's correspondent balance, he was able to obtain \$725,794 from Fulton between 1963 and 1972. He borrowed \$73,000 from the Hamilton Bank of Dalton. He borrowed \$140,000 from the Farmers & Merchant Bank in Summerville. He borrowed \$133,120 from the Cobb County Bank in Powder Springs. He borrowed \$250,000 from the Roswell Bank in Roswell. He borrowed \$214,382 from the First National Bank of Brunswick. He borrowed \$389,820 from Northwest Georgia. He borrowed \$85,000 from the First National Bank in Rome. He borrowed \$40,000 from the National City Bank of Rome. He borrowed \$1,377,494 from the Georgia Railroad Bank in Augusta. He borrowed \$16,000 from the Harwick Bank in Dalton. He borrowed \$83,000 from the Clayton County Bank in Riverdale. He borrowed \$75,000 from the Hamilton Bank in Atlanta. On an autumn day in 1970, he borrowed \$618,500 from the American National Bank in Chattanooga. He borrowed \$100,000 from the Gilmer County Bank. He borrowed \$175,000 from the Trust Company Bank in Atlanta. He borrowed \$143,467 from the United American Bank in Knoxville. He borrowed \$300,000 from his friend Thomas Mitchell. He also pocketed \$58,000 raised at the Bert Lance Appreciation Dinner. It covered an overdraft.

All this reminds me of a modified Ponzi scheme, and it is in the nature of Ponzi schemes to look terribly obvious when the last bluff is called, the string has run out, and it is time to call in the chips, whereupon they, too, are discovered to consist of nothing but Dead Sea fruit. Certainly there appeared to be nothing amiss with Bert Lance in the eyes of the presumably hard-nosed and intelligent officers of the Manufacturers Hanover Trust Company when he approached them in April of 1975 with a proposal that, with one exception, was to crown his career as a professional debtor: the Big Loan, which eventually worked out to \$2,625,000. Although Lance had never gone for a single pot of that size before, he carried on much as usual. His financial statement reflected a net worth of \$3,453,777 when his net worth was actually only \$2,043,998 and much of that consisted of stocks

and property bought with the proceeds of loans. He doubled in brass by making an identical application at Citibank, N.A., then NBG's principal New York correspondent, business he then proceeded to promise Manufacturers. Citibank refused to make the loan. On April 29, NBG opened a correspondent account at Manufacturers. On June 30, Lance got his money.

The loan was secured by 148,118 shares of NBG common stock—shares the loan was to be used to purchase—and 8,375 shares of Calhoun. In addition, the bank asked for assignments of death benefits from Lance's life insurance and requested a signed undertaking that he would remain president of NBG for the duration of the loan. The bank and, specifically, a vice-president named Betsy Jo Viener then learned what it was like to loan money to Bert Lance. First, 4,000 shares of the Calhoun stock turned out to be registered in the name of the Lancelot Company. Viener first called the Lancelot situation to Lance's attention in July and was still calling it to his attention the following October. The purpose statement was signed but not completed. There was endless trouble over the life insurance. Lance skipped a \$21,911.46 interest payment. He failed to forward a stock dividend of 14,811 shares. Viener tried to track him down at the ABA convention and missed him. Then he failed to pick up his telephone. She sent him forms carefully marked with an X so he would be in no doubt about where to sign. It is not recorded if he did so. Unlike a dunning notice from the electric company, however, all of this correspondence was characterized by a cordiality befitting a transaction in excess of two and a half million bucks; someone who doesn't pay his electric bill is treated quite nastily, but a man who fudges the details on a multimillion-dollar loan generally is not.

Lance couldn't have given the stock dividend to Manufacturers if he'd wanted to, by the way. He'd already used it as collateral on a \$150,000 loan from the Chemical Bank.

Maybe it could have gone on forever. By this time, however, Lance clearly had gone too far. His appetite for money was unabated, and now he was operating on a national scale. In December, 1976, NBG opened a correspondent account at the First National Bank of Chicago. Simultaneously, NBG's correspondent account at Manufacturers underwent a dramatic shrinkage. On January 6, 1977, the First National Bank of Chicago loaned Bert Lance \$3,425,000. Lance then paid off Manufacturers.

On January 7, 1977, the day after the Chicago loan, Lance prepared a financial statement. It alleged that his net worth on that date was \$2,624,558. It was nothing of the sort. He underestimated his liabilities by \$1,213,533. Thus, Lance's actual net worth was \$1,411,025. If all his contingent liabilities are included in the total, Bert Lance's net worth on January 7, 1977, was *minus* \$372,992.

I suppose this only goes to prove that Max Beerbohm was right when he said we are who we pretend to be, and therefore it is important to pretend to be something rather splendid. Lance had pretended to be rich, and—hey, presto—he was. If events hadn't intervened he might be a rich man still. God only knows how many others there are like him, so many emperors of ice cream. Their fortunes are out there somewhere even now, shunting through the relays and winging over the wires, and unless the electricity finally fails for good, they may never know how broke they really are. The end might never have come for Bert Lance at all (or at least, then) if he hadn't decided to go to Washington and pretend to be something else.

A piggy bank

RONICALLY, HE WAS almost undone by a computer and a thief. In July, 1975, Lance discovered that the agricultural-loan officer at Calhoun, a man named Billy Lee Campbell, had his hand in the till. Lance immediately informed

the FBI. He was later to remind his accusers of this again and again: he himself had called in the cops; he himself had taken the only course open to a responsible citizen. There never was much doubt about Campbell's guilt; starting on February 4, 1971, and progressing steadily from point A to point B, he had helped himself to some \$994,004.02. While Lance and his associates were turning Calhoun's assets into the stuff of dreams, Billy Lee Campbell drained off real cash, and in this old-fashioned manner, Calhoun's affairs came under the highly interested scrutiny of a young federal lawyer named Jeffrey Bogart.

As it happened, the attention of the federal attorney's office in Atlanta had been drawn to Calhoun some time before, when a colleague of Bogart's received a copy of a memo written by John Sherry of the Enforcement and Compliance Section of the Comptroller's office. Among other things, it described the hot checks written by the campaign committees, the disguised disbursements of funds, and the washing out of the books. Bogart read it over. Then he sent to Calhoun for a list of Campbell's overdrafts. The bank's computer responded with an embarrassment of riches. It sent a printout of Campbell's overdrafts, all right, but on that printout was included the overdrafts of every other officer in the bank, including Bert Lance. What the hell is this? thought Bogart. He read the printout again. Then he picked up the Sherry memorandum. My God, he thought. That's not a bank. It's a piggy bank.

He didn't know the half of it.

It seemed likely that as soon as he finished with

the Campbell case, Bogart was going to have to seek an indictment of his star witness, Bert Lance. Bogart immediately began to negotiate a plea for Campbell.

On October 29, 1976, Billy Lee Campbell was sentenced to eight years in prison. Meanwhile, Bogart sent an FBI agent named Richard Ramsby to Calhoun with a subpoena for the bank's board of director minutes and the auditor reports on the accounts of its officers, employees, and their families going back to January 1, 1970. Y. A. Henderson, Lance's successor, told Ramsby that the records in question were not in the bank because they had been sent to the Comptroller's office in Washington. This was either very bold or very careless of Mr. Henderson, because they appear to have been reposing only a few feet from his desk, but his declaration had the effect of reducing Bogart's investigation to a snail's pace. Bogart made a mistake. He assumed that Henderson was telling the truth, and instead of ordering Ramsby to turn the bank upside down, he wrote to Randall Miller at the Justice Department and requested the documents. Another case intervened, and it was not until November 19, two weeks after Bert Lance's best friend had been elected President of the United States, that Bogart returned to the file and discovered that Miller had not replied. Bogart phoned Washington. Miller told him that Justice didn't have the documents. He also advanced the novel theory that 18 USC 610 applied only to federal elections.



Black Star

Bogart called the Comptroller's office. The Comptroller's office expressed ignorance of any documents. Bogart called Justice again. Justice said no, the documents were at the Comptroller's. Bogart called the Comptroller's office. This time he hit pay dirt; copies of the documents had been found and would be sent along, but first the Comptroller's office wanted a formal request from the U.S. attorney. Bogart typed two letters. The first informed Robert Bloom, the acting Comptroller, that he had the case under investigation. The second, prepared for the signature of Bogart's chief, John Stokes, requested the papers.

Lance's luck was running. Stokes, a Republican, hoped to complete twenty years of federal service in order to qualify for his pension, and he was actively lobbying with Griffin Bell and others to achieve this result. Stokes didn't sign the letter. On December 2, he transferred the Calhoun case to himself and closed it the same day. When the FBI called on him later that month as part of the background investigation of Bert Lance, potential government employee, Stokes was able to assure the investigators that the government had declined to prosecute. What he said was entirely true.

Jeffrey Bogart has since left federal service.

Meanwhile, Lance had not been idle on his own behalf. Whatever delusions he might have entertained about the solidity of his personal fortune, one fact was concrete and undeniable: the bank at Calhoun remained subject to the agreement, and the agreement did not look good. On November 22, he visited Donald Tarleton, the Comptroller's regional administrator, in his office in Atlanta. During the course of the conversation, Lance chanced to mention that he was about to become the second most powerful man in Washington. Shortly after Lance took his leave, Tarleton canceled the agreement.

Robert Bloom was not terribly pleased with Tarleton's action—regional administrators do not, as a rule, cancel agreements, and Calhoun still wasn't in the best of shape. But Lance continued to lead a charmed life; fortune may or may not favor the brave, but it definitely exhibits a strong bias in favor of those who have the ear of the king. Bloom, a career civil servant who had never once been the subject of a raid or even a feeler from the private sector, badly wanted to be appointed Comptroller for real. Instead of reimposing the agreement, he removed the Calhoun file from its usual place and locked it in the safe in his office bathroom. When it appeared that the *Wall Street Journal* had gotten wind of the affair, he cleared a press release with Lance's lawyer, and when the FBI came calling with the background investigation, Bloom actually consulted him on what to release. On January 18, 1977, he informed the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee that, in his opinion, Bert Lance would make a swell director of the Office of Management and Budget. Bloom later said that he didn't want to be

the skunk at the garden party. On the other hand, he didn't get to be Comptroller of the Currency either.

Sins of omission



Y THE MIDDLE of 1977, Bert Lance's illusory fortune was melting like Brigadoon at sunrise. The market value of his stock had declined, and precisely because he was the second most powerful man in the government he was unable

to keep it moving except in one potentially disastrous way: he had to sell it. He had to sell it because, as part of the price he had to pay to enter an Administration dedicated to small-town virtues, he had unequivocally promised to do so by the last hour of the last day of the year.

Here, if anywhere, lies the definitive proof of the state of Bert Lance's conscience: he thought he could work it out. He may or may not have been aware that only luck in the form of one man's pension and another's ambition had gotten Bogart off his trail and deflected the FBI and the Senate, but his actions were supremely confident. No one had ever laid a hand on him, he was always the man he pretended to be, and he gave a star performance. When he returned to the Governmental Affairs Committee to request an extension of his deadline, he was nothing but a friendly man with an irksome problem that could be banished with a word. There wasn't a Senator on the committee who seemed reluctant to utter it.

And so Bert Lance stepped directly into a trap laid 200 years ago by James Madison. The committee might have been willing to say the word, but there was the small matter of the press, particularly that segment of the press where the columns of a former Nixon speechwriter appeared. In these matters it is important to give the appearance of being fair, and especially so in the immediate aftermath of Watergate. An investigation was ordered, another small matter, but one that brought Mr. Madison's separation of powers into full play. Bert Lance should have known that, too, but his career has been one of many such telling omissions. He didn't stop giving his in-laws money. He failed to keep his bank solvent. He couldn't stop writing checks. He couldn't stop borrowing money. He couldn't write accurate financial statements. Now, it appears, he had failed to read the Constitution of the United States. Once the investigation began, there was no way anyone in the Executive branch could stop it.

The green books began to fill. Bert Lance had forgotten something else. Computers can be programmed to lie, but they also write down everything they know. □

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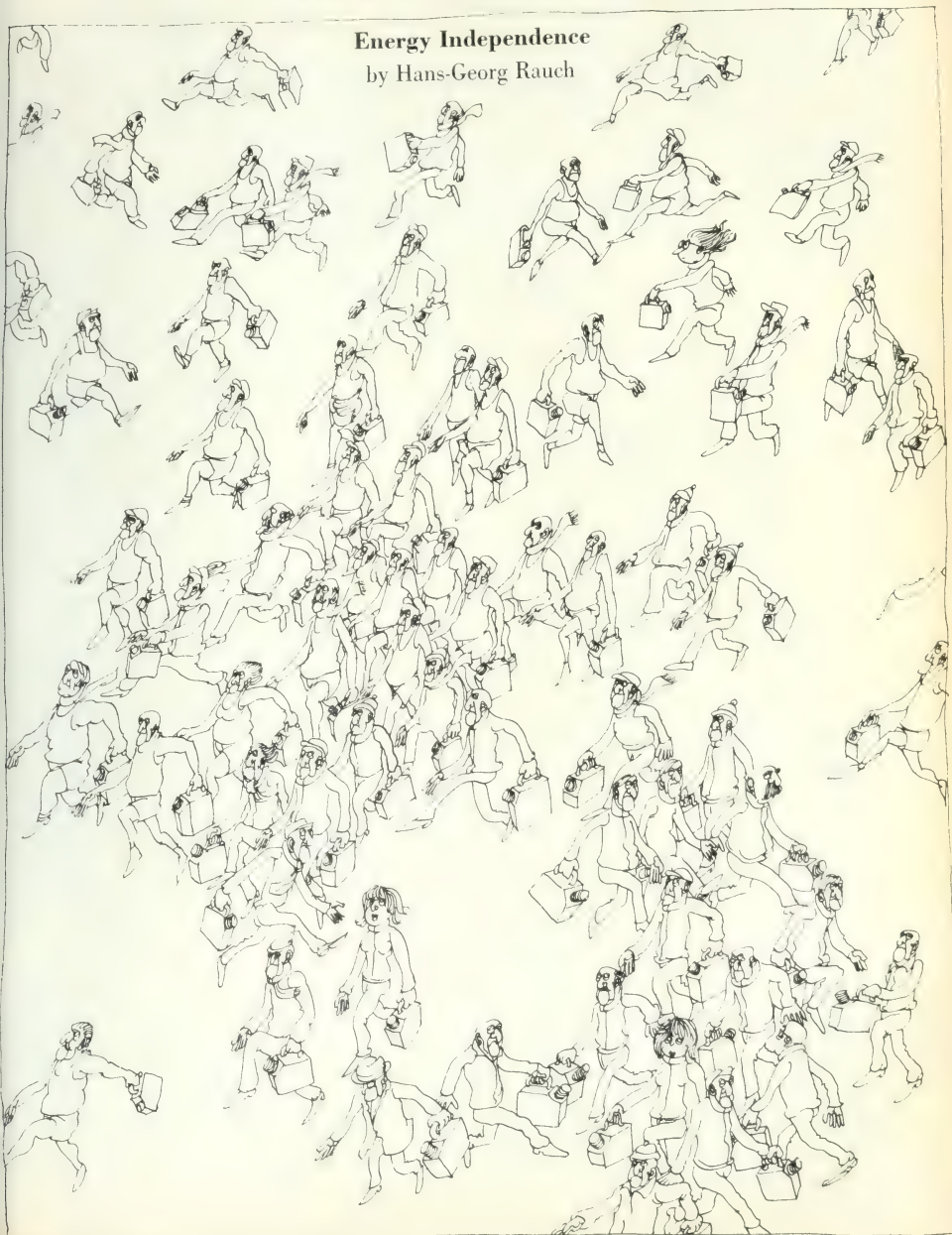
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LINES OF SIGHT

Energy Independence by Hans-Georg Rauch



RENDEZVOUS WITH MARGRET OR: HAPPY ENDING

by Heinrich Böll

A short story
translated by
Leila Vennewitz

THE JOURNEY THERE was pleasant: the Rhine still under early-morning mist; weeping willows, barges, sirens, the trip taking precisely as long as I needed for my breakfast. Coffee and rolls acceptable, eggs fried; no baggage, just cigarettes, newspaper, matches, return ticket, ballpoint pen, wallet, and handkerchief, and the certainty of seeing Margret again. After so many years, after several abortive meetings, after knowing her for more than forty years, I had been surprised and stirred by something I had never seen before: her handwriting, strong yet graceful, and the words, written on the death announcement with surprising firmness: "do come—it would give me so much pleasure to see you again." The small *d* in *do* made me suspect that she had never come to terms with the capital *D*; we all have a letter or two that we stumble over.

On arrival I got rid of my largest piece of baggage, the newspaper. I left it behind in the dining car and reached the cemetery in good time after my own fashion: too late for the *Largo*, the *De Profundis*, and the incense in the chapel, too late also to join the cortege. I was just in time to see the acolytes taking off their vestments and bundling them under their arms as they walked away. The taller one unscrewed the processional cross into three sections, packing it away in a case obviously designed for that purpose, and as they got into the waiting taxi they all lighted cigarettes: priest, driver, and acolytes. The driver offered the priest a light, the younger acolyte did the same for the older one, and at that point one of them must have made a joke: I saw them all laugh, saw the older acolyte coughing with laughter and cigarette smoke,

and I had to laugh, too, when I thought of the sacristy cupboards where in another five minutes they would be putting away their paraphernalia: oak, baroque, 300 years old, the pride of the parish of Saint Francis Xavier which in 1925 had been renamed Saint Peter Canisius; and it wasn't I, it was the deceased who had just been buried, on whose coffin clods of earth were still falling, he who had saved the day in 1945 by his inspired recollection of the depth of those cupboards where behind the neat piles of altar linen and various sacred utensils, we had hidden cigarettes and coffee stolen from the Americans when they left their Jeeps unattended or invited us in groups to a kind of werewolf-reeducation. It was he, not I, who, with the corrupt cunning of the European, had correctly sized up the Americans' naive awe of ecclesiastical institutions, and for years I had wondered why instead of claiming credit for this inspiration he had always ascribed it to me. Much later, long after I had left home, it dawned on me that a story of that kind would have done no service to his respectability, whereas it "fitted" me, although I never really had that idea, nor ever would have.

I APPROACHED the Zerhoff family grave with circumspection, avoiding the path on which I would have encountered me with and without top hats, ladies with and without Persian lamb coats, former schoolmates and knights of Catholic orders, schoolmates as knights of Catholic orders. I walked along the familiar path between the rows of graves to our own family grave, where the last burial—my father's—had taken place five years

Heinrich Böll won the Nobel Prize in 1972. His most recently published works are *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*, a novel, and a collection of essays entitled *Misleading Persons* (both published by McGraw-Hill). Copyright © 1978 by Heinrich Böll; translation copyright © 1979 by Leila Vennewitz.



Heinrich Böll
ENDEZVOUS
WITH
MARGRET
OR: HAPPY
ENDING

ago; it had been insinuated that he had died brokenhearted because neither of his two sons had begotten a male heir in any woman's womb; well, he had no female heir either. The burial plot was well cared for, the lease paid; the gravel was truly snow-white, the beds of pansies heart-shaped, the pansies in turn—nine or eleven to a bed—planted in the shape of a heart. The names of Mother, Father, and Josef on the lectern-shaped marble grave-stones; above Josef's name, the inevitable Iron Cross; the gravestones of long-dead ancestors overgrown with ivy and, rising above all the graves, the simple, classicistic, vaguely Puritan cross, to which had later been added a scroll proclaiming in neo-Gothic script: LOVE NEVER ENDETH. A gravestone was ready for me, too, the last bearer of the name; the dash after my name and birth date, that graphic "to," had something ominous about it. Who would continue to pay the (not inconsiderable) lease when my earthly days were done? Margret, probably. She was a woman in good health, well off, childless, a tea drinker, a moderate smoker, and in the melody of her handwriting, particularly in the small *d*, I could perceive a long life for her.

I stood behind the tamarisk hedge, now grown quite dense, that separated the Zerhoff burial plot from ours, and then I saw her: she seemed more attractive than ever, more so than the girl of fifteen with whom I had lain in the grass, more so than the woman of twenty, thirty, and thirty-five with whom I had had those embarrassing and abortive reunions, the last one fifteen years ago in Sinzig when she turned on her heel outside the hotel room and drove away; she hadn't even allowed me to take her to the station. She must be close to fifty now, her thick, rather coarse blond hair had turned an attractive gray, and black suited her.

As children we had often had to come out here on summer evenings to water the flowers: my brother Josef, Margret, myself, and her brother Franz, into whose grave the last members of the cortege where just then throwing their flowers or their shovelfuls of earth; the familiar drumming of earth on wood, the impact of the bunches of mimosa like the alighting of a bird. Often we had spent our streetcar money on ice cream, setting out on the long homeward journey on foot and, in the summer heat, soon regretting our recklessness, but invariably Josef had produced some hidden "reserves" and paid our fares

home, and on the streetcar, relieved and tired we would argue about whether he had paid for our ice cream or our fares.

I still had to fight back my tears when I thought of Josef, and I still didn't know, after thirty-four years I didn't know, whether it was his death or his last wish that brought tears to my eyes. At the very end of the platform beyond the station roof, before the arrival of the leave train, we had once again discussed ways and means of not returning to the front fever, accident, medical certificates—and in the end it was Margret who broke the taboo and spoke of—what do they call it?—"desertion," and Father had stamped his foot in rage and said: "There is no such thing as desertion in our family!" and Josef had laughed and said: "Where to? Am I supposed to swim across the Channel or to Sweden, or across Lake Constance to Switzerland—and Vladivostok, you know, is a pretty long way off," and he was already standing on the steps, the stationmaster had blown his whistle, when he leaned down once more and said clearly, more to me than to my father: "Please, no priests at my grave, no mumbo-jumbo at any memorial service." He was nineteen, had given up the study of theology, and Margret was at that time considered almost his fiancée. We never saw him again. We winced, I more than my father, Margret less, as if whipped by his last words; and of course, when the news of his death arrived, reminded Father of Josef's last wish, not repeating his words, I was too scared to do that but simply saying: "You know what he asked for, what his last wish was." But Father had waved me away and, I need hardly say, not done as Josef had asked. They had indeed had their memorial service, with incense, Latin and catafalque; in solemn pomp they had executed their precise choreography, in their black, gold-embroidered brocade robes, and they had even rounded up a choir of theology students who sang something in Greek. The Eastern Churches were already becoming very fashionable. I have never entered a church since, except as an acolyte and in my late capacity as salesman of devotional supplies, and when Franz Zerhoff and I had assisted at solemn requiems, they had sometimes reminded me, in their heavy, gold-embroidered brocade robes, of Soviet marshals with their bulky gold shoulder pieces and their chests covered with about a hundred and fifty decorations. Always plenty of Latin, male choir in red-and-white sashes, top hats trem-

ling in their hands, and the air trembling with the vehemence of their chest tones.

MARGRET'S MOUTH was surprisingly small and still not hard under her austere nose; she was slimmer, only her wrists revealed traces of plumpness. There she stood, dignified, erect, shaking hands, nodding, yet she had kept that swift, ephemeral, springy quality. The gray around her head reminded me of the whitish gray dust in her hair when we staggered out of the burning house and lay down in the garden on the grass, came together on that June night after saying goodbye to Josef, when so many values and so much that was valuable had been destroyed; and I thought of the dust in her kisses, in her tears, of our irresponsible laughter when Father also came staggering out of the house and saw us lying there, and how our dust-powdered faces screwed up with laughter when he twisted the key to his safe in the air as if it, the air, contained his securities and all that notarized stuff; and of course he didn't know, none of us knew, that in this so charmingly conventional war degrees of heat would build up that venerable safes could not withstand. And in the end, when later they were poking through the debris, he had found nothing but ashes in this molten safe, and it had been Margret, not I (who was of course familiar with such sayings), who told him: "*Memento, quia pulvis es et...*," but she did not complete the sentence. For a time we were inseparable, but we never came together again, not even with a kiss, not even with a handclasp.

Margret turned toward me and, in a kind of bitter joy, her woman's face changed to the face of that girl who, with me, had scorned accepted values on that June night—or had I then embraced the Margret of today, had I at last caught up with her, she with me? Had Josef's curse at last truly united us? I thought of him, of the whiplash with which he had changed the course of my life, and I realized here, at last, that that was what he had wanted: to change the course of my life, away from gold brocade, male choirs, family graves, real and potential knights of Catholic orders. Perhaps that was the only thing he had learned in that gloriously conventional war, and today, here, facing Margret, I had no reason to bear a grudge against him on that score. I bore no grudge against anyone, not even against my father, who later became

very silent, almost humble, and who always looked so expectantly at me when Margret came over from next door. We used to go to the movies, to the theater, for walks, we had long discussions—but we never got as far as even a handclasp, even a flicker of memory. I carried on as an acolyte, regarding it as a job (tips and free meals); I got into the black market, finished high school, left home, and, via the black market, ended up in the devotional-supplies business when I was asked to get hold of a Leonardo da Vinci print for a Moselle vintner's first communion in exchange for butter, and did so. I had a few affairs, and I imagine Margret did, too.

I WAS STANDING close enough to be able to read the word "Blackbird" from Margret's lips. I nodded, withdrew, and headed for the "Blackbird," where funeral receptions have been held since time immemorial. I only had to go back to the exit, cross the street, and walk for five minutes through Douglas firs. At the "Blackbird" they were already busy cutting up limp rolls, spreading them with butter, adding slices of sausage or cheese, and decorating them with mayonnaise. I wondered whether Aunt Marga was still alive, she had always insisted on having blood sausage with onion rings, as greedily as if she were starving, although everyone knew that not even she had any idea of the extent of her fortune. The coffee machine was steaming, brandy sniffers were being placed on trays, freshly opened bottles beside them (Margret was sure to have firmly insisted on a price "by the bottle"), bottles of mineral water were being snapped open, flowers stuck in little vases. Still the same old, old-fashioned routine.

I recognized the priest, who had arrived without the acolytes and was sitting in a corner smoking a cigar with a contented, off-duty expression. He nodded at me. Not because he recognized me, we had never met. He looked like a nice fellow, I sat down at his table and asked him about the special carrying case for the collapsible cross: in my days as an acolyte we used to have to lug the whole cross around, and it had always been a problem getting it into a car without smashing a window or knocking top hats off heads. And I knew of a few rural communities where the old processional cross was still in use. He told me the name of the company, I jotted it down on my return ticket, then we both speculated as to why people continued to put up

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ENDING

with those limp rolls. I told him that even as children we had called those sandwiches "Blackbird pasteboard with mayonnaise," whether we were present as mourners or acolytes or—as frequently happened—as mourning acolytes. They were behind the times, there should be "Hawaiian Toast" or something, and sherry, not brandy, and not Persian lamb coats but mink, and instead of the lousy coffee—why did it always have to be so lousy, everywhere?—they should have ordered mocha, which did sometimes turn out like reasonably good coffee.

I glanced at my return ticket, where I had noted the trains: 14:22, 15:17, then none till 17:03; it was now just on eleven, and if I wanted to take Margret along, if I wanted, after thirty-four years, to touch her hair that evening, I supposed I would have to stay on a while and run the risk of encountering a former schoolmate or two among the red-and-white sashes, maybe even among the Catholic knights: one of them was sure to shout the opening lines of *The Odyssey*—in Greek, of course—into my ear, to prove that his classical education had not failed to leave its mark on him. Another, although we had graduated from high school more than thirty years ago and not seen each other since, taking it for granted that I would fully agree, would start moaning about modern times, about his spoiled brats, the Socialists, the general moral decline, and how he was working himself to death in his practice while his third or fourth apartment building was costing him more and more due to this damned inflation. I was prepared to endure this; I knew this kind of talk from funerals I had attended not as a mourner but professionally: I also have an agency for gravestones, and my top hat counts as professional clothing and is tax-deductible. It couldn't take all that long: if we missed the 2:22 we would certainly catch the 3:17.

I WAS IN LUCK, it was Bertholdi who sat down beside me. I recalled that in eight years of school I hadn't exchanged so much as forty words with him. There had been simply no occasion to do so, and I had reason to regret this now. He was a very nice fellow, without that bitter-sour expression that seems inevitable with successful as well as unsuccessful men at the start of the last third of their lives. Bertholdi asked how my business was going, and when I told him that I had

been selling devotional supplies for some years now, he remarked that it must be hard going in this post-Vatican Council era. I agreed that business had taken a beating, but I could also report a certain upswing, and when he mentioned "Lefebvre?" I nodded but also shook my head. His shrewd question could be answered only partially in the affirmative: there was also, I said, independently of the person he had named, a return to the traditional that expressed itself in top hats, bridetrains, elaborate celebrations of first communions, confirmations, and weddings, and in its wake helped the sale of modern devotional supplies, well-crafted icon copies, for instance in fact anything smacking of the Eastern Churches.

Because he spoke so nicely about his wife and children, I volunteered the information that, together with some business associates I was engaged in opening up a new market for good icon reproductions: the Soviet Union, which we were supplying—illegally, of course—with excellent reproductions that were mounted over there on old wood panels, preferably worm-eaten, and painted over by skilled craftsmen, and for which there was a good demand. Since artists, craftsmen, and dealers naturally preferred foreign currency, quite a few of these reproductions were finding their way back via the tourist black market. Not exactly sharing in the profits, but doing its best to help, was an organization calling itself "Pictures for the Eastern Churches"; too many Soviet citizens in all the republics had sold off their family icons, and now, caught up in the religious wave, found themselves without pictures. And, inwardly uneasy because Margret was still moving around and had not yet sat down, I went on to tell Bertholdi the trade's classic story of that long-dead colleague who, putting his trust in the religious currents prevalent during World War I, found himself stuck with some 10,000 portraits of Pope Benedict XV and lacked the financial and mental resources to save his business by profiting from the long reigns of the two Piuses. When asked by Bertholdi whether I would still invest much in Paul VI, I said: "As a contemporary, perhaps as a dealer in devotional supplies, no," adding that the only pope who had remained in demand after his death was John XXIII.

Bertholdi thanked me for this insight into the "subtleties" of my business and returned the compliment with an autobiographical sketch: he was a senior official in the educa-

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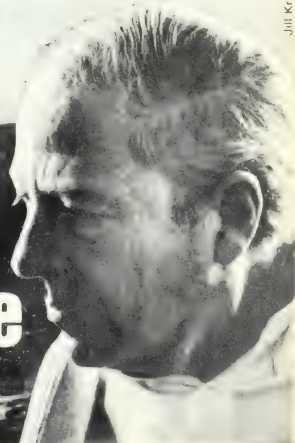
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HERMAN WOUK

War and Remembrance



Jill Krentz

Heinrich Böll
ENDEZVOUS
WITH
MARGRET
OR: HAPPY
ENDING

tional system, complained neither of his children nor of the youth of today, spoke affectionately of his wife, laughingly discussed his pension with all its probable progressions and deductions; he hoped, he was confident, that he would be able to take early retirement so that he would finally have time to read Proust and Henry James. At last Margret came and sat down beside me, beckoned to a waitress to bring me a little pot of mocha, placed her hand on my arm, and said: "I remember how you hate bad coffee, and"—she didn't take away her hand—"just now, when I saw you standing there, it occurred to me, after all these years it occurred to me, that he didn't curse God at all."

"No," I said, "it was only those cursed by God whom he cursed. And that curse was the blessing that he gave us."

Willi Offermann, seated across from us next to the priest, tried to bait me by speaking of Jerusalem and the Holy Sepulchre, and of people who had no religion yet lived very well off it. Did he mean me, or the dealers in devotional supplies in Jerusalem? Do I have no religion and live very well off it? Both questions filled me with doubts. True, I did live off it, but not as well as he seemed to believe, not even my gravestone agency brought in much, although I can offer the latest designs and good African stones; and sometimes when I was checking a new shipment of rosaries (for which there was no longer much demand, at least not at the moment, in spite of Lefebvre), I would grasp one and recite the entire rosary. So as not to be looking constantly at Margret, who had got up again to tell a waiter carrying a plate of onion rings and slices of blood sausage to take it over to where Aunt Marga was indeed sitting, I looked at Offermann's wife: she was next to the priest and leaning across him in an effort to calm down her husband on the other side when Offermann suddenly raised his voice and started abusing the "Red scum!"—which was nonsense, because he hadn't seen me for thirty-one years and could have no idea whether I was red or green; besides, a minimum of logic should have told him that no sensible dealer in devotional supplies—and that's what I was—would ever vote for any party without the prefix "Christian." This was so obvious that he could have saved himself his uninformed provocation; I behaved as if he certainly couldn't mean me and smiled at his wife, who looked so nice that he couldn't possibly have deserved her.

THEN MARGRET was beside me again pouring mocha and remembering the I took whipped cream with it; she had brought over a little dish of it. She smelled of soap, toilet water, and perspiration, a smell that I perceived as familiar—yet it couldn't possibly be familiar to me. It was as if we had spent these thirty-four years together, her years becoming mine, a commotion of the years: some things neglected but nothing missed. I found her much more beautiful than on that June night; actually she had never been a beauty, she had always seemed like a girl who had been bicycling too fast and broken into a sweat, yet she had never been on a bicycle. As I looked at her she became younger and younger, until I could see her playing ball on the path between our two houses, flushed, eager, yet quiet, and she was, after all, the first and only woman from whose lips I had heard the word *desertion*.

She kept her hand on my arm, and Offermann grew even angrier, prophesying doom and seeming to hold me, me personally, responsible for the simultaneous decline in morals and faith; and not even when he spoke of my brother Josef ("Of course, if you brother Josef were still alive, but then the best always get killed!") did I allow myself to be provoked into saying something like "You didn't get killed either, nor did Margret—who turned pale and whose hand on my arm was trembling. Finally Offermann attacked the priest, whom he accused of being too passive, and it was I who, in order to calm him down, whispered the opening lines of *The Odyssey* to him across the table. That actually had an effect: his face relaxed, and his wife smiled at me gratefully; the priest was relieved. I had looked at the time and found it was only twelve o'clock and that we would be able to catch the 2:22, and during my Homer recitation I thought of coffee and cakes on the train, thought of the crowded dining car, which was now moving beside the Rhine toward the Lorelei rock, and that probably they still served nothing but that see cake that was enough to choke a person. But it was a long time since I had last ridden in the dining car in the afternoon, I merely remembered that Margret liked that damn cake. Once, on the train to Sinzig, she had told me it reminded her of a deceased aunt of whom she had been very fond. I beckoned to the waitress and asked her to order me a taxi for a quarter to two.

IN OUR TIME

by Tom Wolfe

Professor Nkhrani Emu
Chairman, Department of Anthropology
University of Chembuezi
Babuelu, Chembuezi

Most Esteemed Professor:

As you know, dear Sir, our research team is approaching the end of its field study of "The Sexual Mores of the Americans." I hereby request, most respectfully, that we be granted an extension of the term of our project and a renewal of funding for this work. It is impossible for anyone in a society such as ours to envision from afar the bizarre sexual customs, practices, and rituals to be observed among the American people.

In the republic's largest city, New York, the most prestigious form of entertainment takes place in theaters that have been converted to dance halls. Hundreds of young males wearing strap undershirts, string vests, and leather garments may be seen dancing with one another to flashing lights and recorded music in a homoerotic frenzy, while prominent citizens, including politicians, lawyers, financiers, and upper-class matrons, as well as every sort of well-known figure in the arts, most of them heterosexual, look on, apparently greatly stimulated by the atmosphere. This is described in the native press as "disco fever."

In fact, the mores that have grown up among the Americans concerning homosexuality are apt to be most baffling to the investigator first arriving from a society such as ours. In the United States it is the homosexual male who takes on the appearance that in our society is associated with heterosexual masculinity. Which is to say, he wears his hair short in a style known as the *crew cut* or *butch cut*; he wears the simple leather jacket, sleeveless shirt, crew sweater, or steel-toed boot of the day laborer, truck driver, soldier, or sailor; and, if he exercises, he builds up the musculature of his upper arms and chest. The heterosexual male, by contrast, wears long hair, soft open-throated shirts that resemble a woman's blouse, necklaces, gold wristwatches, shapeless casual jackets of a sort worn also by women; and, if he exercises, he goes in for a feminine form of running called *jogging*.

The most popular periodicals in America consist of photographs of young women with gaping pudenda and text of a purportedly serious nature, such as interviews with presidents of the republic (!). These are known as "one-hand magazines."

It is the custom throughout the native schools



of America to give *sex education* in the classroom to children by the age of thirteen. The children are taught that sexual intercourse is natural, beautiful, and the highest expression of human love. They are also taught that sexual energy is one of a person's most powerful and creative forces, that it will find expression in some form, that it should not be denied. Yet the Americans are at the same time baffled by the fact that the number of pregnancies out of wedlock among schoolgirls rises continually. In this the Americans are somewhat like the Kombanda tribesmen of our country, who, ignorant of the causal relation of activities separated by time, believe that pregnancy is caused by the sun shining on the bare midsections of females of a certain age. The administrators of the American schools remain bewildered, saying that in the sex-education classes females are given pamphlets clearly outlining birth-control procedures. At the same time, their own records show that only a fraction of American secondary-school graduates can read.

So, most revered Sir, we beseech your support in obtaining for us the resources to complete our work. You will recall, Sir, pointing out to us the importance of Diedrich's discovery of the Luloras, the tribe that made its women climb trees and remain there throughout their menstrual periods. Well, Sir—in all humility!—we are convinced that through our work here we have uncovered a yet more primitive layer in the anthropology of human sexual evolution.

Your worshipful student and friend,
Pontho Mboti

New York City,
United States of America

IMAGES OF ANONYMITY

World War II in black and white

by Paul Fussell

IT'S HARD TO REALIZE that the war began forty years ago. I mean the war that matters, the one that divided Europe down the middle, shrank Germany, transformed China, begot the Third World, conferred Southeast Asia on the Americans for a generation, and reduced Britain to the status of the Netherlands. The one that killed 55 million people and spawned the acronym habit (CINCPAC, ETOUSA, AMGOT), and, as Belzen and Maidenek were uncovered, jolted the progressive modern world into an understanding, dormant since the Renaissance, of the reality of evil. The one that extinguished European Jewry but redeemed the New York intellectual tone and made America a culturally serious place for the first time in its existence. The one that created 13 million veterans and then established the contemporary middle-class conception of the desirable by sending them to universities, installing them in professions, and lending them money to start businesses and buy the proclaimed ideal one-family suburban American house. The war matters, too, because it brought forth the jet engine and the rocket with a warhead and penicillin and the atomic pile and the proximity fuse and the Pentagon and the paperback.

Those who had direct adult access to the war and who experienced firsthand its forms and textures are now in their fifties. Others curious about it must depend upon volumes of history and memoir, and upon paintings and drawings and photographs. Paintings like those in James Jones's *WWII* are of little use: their news is less about the war than about the state of representational painting and illustration and hack portraiture during the early Forties. We could use a *Guernica* about Oradour-sur-Glane or Manila or Aachen. In its absence we can read, or reread, some photographs from the war, photographs so familiar they risk growing dull. Now is a good time to interpret them, before they begin to look as if Matthew Brady took them.

OUR HISTORICAL INSTINCT about World War II, our "myth," if you will, is that it constituted a notably moral common cause, one moment in our history when the well-known American greed, centrifugalism, and jealous individualism briefly subdued themselves in the interests of virtue. Because the concentration camps and the Japanese treatment of prisoners were so much more loathsome than anything the Americans did—with the possible exception of dropping the second atomic bomb—the war, as the journalist Paul Addison has said, "served a generation of . . . Americans as a myth which enshrined their essential purity, a parable of good and evil." And it would be a mistake to imagine that *myth* betokens some sort of fraud or self-deception. Myths assume solidity and staying power only when they are essentially true. If we looked away and humiliated the Nazis, we gassed no Jews, Gypsies, or homosexuals, and we hanged no partisans. If we bombed Dresden, it was someone else who exterminated the Polish officer corps in the Katyn Forest. We did not starve our prisoners to death in Siberia or Manchuria nor hack off the heads of enemy airmen brought down. For purposes of American self-definition, it was, in the words of the journalist Geoffrey Perrett, "the perfect war, . . . a war against palpable evil," a war that confirmed the purposes of the Republic. The solidity of this myth can be measured by the energy and originality Joseph Heller and Thomas Pynchon have had to deploy to chip away at it.

For the myth-making memory, the principle of anonymity is one way of sanctifying the war. The myth requires that "servicemen" be depicted, at least in photographs, as virtually anonymous. Because the war was a common cause, no one in it has a right to appear as anything but anonymous. Thus we feel that American photographs of the war are more significant and "authentic" the less they render identifiable individual human faces. "Stars"

re not wanted. A case in point is the familiarity of the one classic photograph of the war, Joe Rosenthal's flag-raising marines at Iwo Jima. Six men are at work, but the face of only one is visible, dimly and in profile—and in reproductions his face is customarily blacked out to unidentifiable silhouette. The photograph is not about facial expressions but about body expressions, suggesting, in a way bourgeois faces can never do, powerful and simple communal purpose. Change the flag to red and you have "Soviet art." Strip the men and you have Italian Fascist sculpture. The visible right legs



of the six are all "in step," bent the same way, and those parts of faces not obscured by helmets are concealed by the arms reaching up in common. The image is that of a committee, coiled and exhausted, but nevertheless acting "as one man" in a rare, and thus precious, moment of unanimity. The picture seems "right" because it is so successful an emblem of the common will triumphant. It seems right because it raises finally the myth of the New Deal to its apotheosis. It brings an era to an end. After this picture, there's no place to go but "postwar."

The opposite convention, which asserts the identity and uniqueness of individuals, belongs more to the journalistic prose of the war than to its photographs. Correspondents like Richard Tregaskis and Ernie Pyle work by getting in as many hometown names as possible. Thus Tregaskis in *Guadalcanal Diary* (1943): "Our guide was a sturdy young man in high boots, a Capt. Stallings (Capt. George R. Stallings of Augusta, Ga)." In *Brave Men* (1944) Pyle grows even more circumstantial: "When I went up the trail my guide was Pfc. Fred Ford, of

3037 North Park Drive, East St. Louis." In language even the dead can be designated. Pyle's much-loved Captain Waskow, whose body is brought down an Italian mountain by muleback and revered in the moonlight by his men ("I sure am sorry, sir"), is identified as Capt. Henry T. Waskow, of Belton, Texas. One reason the reportorial prose of the war seems so dated is just this constant locating of everyone within a presumably static American scene with significantly different "areas." The post-war mobility and national uniformity make the habit quaint, a last twitch of the local-color impulse.

But photographs possess *mana*, while prose does not. The dead in the photographs must not be identifiable. Henry Waskow's next of kin are pleased to see his name in print, but they must not see his body, nor ever his face. The first published picture of American war dead, which appeared in January, 1943, thirteen months after the United States declared war, ostentatiously shows them facedown on Buna Beach, mercifully half-covered with drifts of wet sand. Photographers of the Malmédy massacre painted snow over the faces to prevent recognition, and in a well-known set of Robert Capa photographs showing one of the last Americans to be killed in Europe dying on a Leipzig balcony, the face is commonly blacked out by "the censor."

Faces of combat infantry in action are rare, too, in photographs, because the photographer is seldom in front of the attacking troops: what we see are expressive but anonymous backs, packs with entrenching tools, helmets from the rear. The photograph of the troops landing on Omaha Beach is characteristic. If you were carrying a camera instead of a rifle, who could blame you for being the last man off the boat and sheltering within it as long as possible?



U.S. Coast Guard

"Photographs possess *mana*, while prose does not. The dead in the photographs must not be identifiable."

Paul Fussell
IMAGES OF
ANONYMITY

ANONYMITY is such a powerful convention in World War II American photography that the picture of the Russian boy partisan about to be hanged near Minsk in October, 1941, strikes one as completely "European," and thus as a useful contrast. Regardless of the common cause, this boy is flaunting his identity, the very extremity of his situation focusing his selfhood.



The normality, even the respectability, of the Germans in the picture is worth noticing. They are *Wehrmacht*, regular German army, not SS, and the one at the lower right, with the glasses, is positively elderly and doubtless quite nice. As a further photograph indicates, when they have finished this job they will hang on the girl a neatly printed sign reading, WE ARE PARTISANS AND HAVE SHOT AT GERMAN SOLDIERS. The sign will be in both German and Russian, and thus, in addition to conveying its intended warning to the local populace, it will cheer up frightened German troops marching past, persuading them that "something is being done."

The girl has been hanging a few minutes. She is only a foot lower than the boy, indicating that she had been standing on a low chair or box, since kicked away. She has slowly strangled in the wartime German way, and the boy does not want to look at her. Is he really smiling? If it is a real smile and not a fleeting grimace, is the cause self-consciousness, bitterness, or despair? Or—a remote possibility—ironic triumph? His wearing his light-colored cap to the last is a *beau geste*. The two-colored decorative rope, suggestive of a bathrobe cord or a gift-tie, is an almost frivolous touch in harmony with the boy's ambiguous expression.

In contrast, anonymity and a vision of the common cause in jeopardy dominate the photograph of the Naval Air Station on Ford Island in Pearl Harbor, taken just after eight o'clock in the morning, December 7, 1941. Japanese planes have just made several bombing and strafing passes while most of the sailors were sleeping, showering, breakfasting, or going about their business in their solid and comfortable permanent barracks. A few of the people who have poured out to the field are running, but most are so shocked they are just looking on, taking in the unbelievable, the mangled ineffectual floatplanes and Catalinas on the ground and the spectacular hot fireball rising in the background, where the battleship *Arizona* has just exploded. Fifteen hundred men are dying over there, but these watchers don't know that yet. The shirtless man on the ground looks less wounded than simply appalled. His legs have given way and he has had to sit down. Why is the standing man who has been talking to him half-dressed in white, his wallet (he's left-handed) in his back pocket? He has been planning to go into Honolulu on a day-pass and has been getting dressed for town. The man a bit farther away, walking, not running, has been caught in the latrine in his shorts and wears a towel or a skivvy shirt around his neck. Decency and normality at all costs. He's so shocked he's decided not to pay attention to the fireball. The emotions here are less terror or horror than disbelief, a dogged, near-psychotic de-



U.S. Navy

ernation to insist that what's happening is not taking place. That's what the wind sock on the hangar at the left seems to be doing, too. The picture can be taken at all only because the war is so new: no one knows, as everyone will in a few months, that he should be down in a slit trench, not standing around.

Because, as Susan Sontag has said, "photography inexorably beautifies," there is complicated irony in the relation of personal disaster to sharp technique in the photograph of the sailor hanging over his gun mount. An ugly



picture, to be sure, in the Weegee auto crash or suicide-jump tradition of tough American spot-news frontal-flash photography of the late Thirties. And yet beautifully composed—a little body, a lot of metal. Here it looks as if the underside of a kamikaze plane has smashed across the gun mount on its way to the superstructure, carrying away most of the sailor's 40-mm anti-aircraft gun and his helmet. In some versions of this print the dark, ragged top of the ammunition box blown off the gun mount has been airbrushed white to simplify the lower half of the picture. The sailor's spine and left arm are broken, and the shock has undone his left cuff button. In photographs dead sailors are always more ironic than dead soldiers if their feet show, because they wear qua-

si-civilian shoes and nice thin "dress" socks. "... there is complicated irony in the relation of personal disaster to sharp technique..."

A MAN'S FACE can sometimes be shown and the picture still project anonymity, as in the one of the small overcoated soldier eating his first hot meal after fifteen days of fighting in the Hürtgen Forest. The artistic tradition here is that of Thirties documentary, the tradition of Walker Evans's *American Photographs* (1938) or Evans and James Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* (1941). To cite Sontag again, documentary aspires to rack the conscience by ferreting out losers like Okies, sharecroppers, and residents of the Tennessee Valley, "the poor and the dispossessed, the nation's forgotten citizens." Or, in the terms James Jones invokes to interpret Sad Sack, "the army's and the war's 'pore dumb fuck' of an eternal victim." The soldier in this photograph is preeminently one of the nation's forgotten citizens, and although the camera singles him out, he is depicted as the prototypical invisible man, representative of the millions of forgotten citizens—who remembers even Generals Hodges and Patch and Devers?—consigned to France during the winter of 1944–45.



U.S. Army

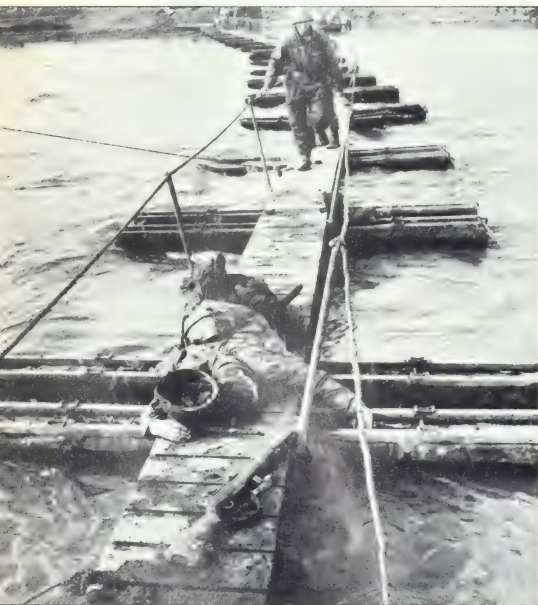
Paul Fussell
IMAGES OF
NONYMITY

The paradigm of this soldier's manner as he eats is the victim-tramp Chaplin asserting his unshakable dignity by dainty gestures involving toothpicks, napkins, saltcellars. This soldier's management of his bread and fork registers a determination to recover his humanity after two weeks' brutalization. Every gesture, even the dancery position of the feet, says, "I am not an animal. I am not." In aid of this point, his tongue is delicately shifting a food particle from a tooth. His hands are shockingly filthy. He's wielding the white bread both to insulate the food from his dirty fingers and to help him pretend he's sitting in a restaurant or at his own dinner table and that the canteen cup is made of porcelain. It is very cold, but he has taken off his gloves while eating to promote this illusion.

Past the need for such rationalizations is the rifleman killed by German mortar-shell fragments when he has almost got safely across a pontoon footbridge on the Roer in 1945. The shell has hit the east bank a few feet away. Hence the bits of dirt on the body. The two men running up are engineers "in charge of" the bridge. They are going to remove the body so that other infantrymen waiting on the far bank to cross will not be demoralized by it. The dead soldier wears a field jacket and a

bandolier of rifle ammunition, and his raincoat is properly folded in his cartridge belt behind. He is a neat and obedient man, and all his articles are arranged the way they're supposed to be. The fingers of his right hand are "extended and joined" as they are when he's at attention or saluting. A good soldier, this man has followed all instructions, and when he has been ordered to run across the bridge, he has run across. He has been wearing a life preserver in case he falls into the river. His rifle will be salvaged, repaired, and reissued.

As these photographs suggest, you can do things with black and white that you can't do with color, just as you can do things with radio and print that you can't do with television. In photographs blood is black, but truce flags and nurses' caps and hospital sheets are white. White is safety and peace and innocence and clean oblivion, the tone of the imagination's final silent snow, secret snow. Hence in these photographs the terrible irony of the partisan's cap, the Ford Island sailor's innocent past-whites, the white of the broken sailor's gun mount, the white bread in the little soldier's hand, the white hand of the good soldier on the Roer pontoon bridge. And there's some eloquent white in the Omaha Beach picture, too. The last man off the boat appears to be wearing on his left shoulder a crude bandage, hastily applied, and the remains of bandages and dressings lie at the right front of the boat, where someone has also abandoned a heavy roll of sound-power telephone wire he's supposed to carry ashore. Most likely it belonged to the wounded man, who now feels satisfactorily out of it and licensed to drop everything, honoring the convention that, once wounded, one turns instantly into a noncombatant and sheds helmet, arms, grenades, and ammunition as fast as possible. One has done one's bit, and there's no need to do it twice.



READING PHOTOGRAPHS of the war is a way of experiencing its very different looks in different places. Topography and flora create profoundly different contexts, giving the look of the war different meanings in different places. In the South Pacific, the setting usually includes palm trees, coconut logs, and sand, lending the proceedings something of the look of a sexy beach-party travesty, especially when sleeves are rolled up or shirts off. The Pacific war takes place in settings romanticized for a generation by South Seas films (and before that by Robert Louis Stevenson and Rupert Brooke), and to be shot at in a venue associated with the assumed ecstasies of Jon Hall and Dorothy La-

our is much more disillusioning than to be not at in, say, mountainous country appropriate for hunting. That kind of country, if you did mules and mud and occasional barren fruit and olive trees, is the theater of the Italian campaign, and of North Africa and Sicily before it. The look of those soldiers is entirely different from the look of the South Pacific soldiers and marines. In Italy, no loose fagotes but olive drab woolens, and plain helmets instead of helmet covers, the marine fixer affected in the South Pacific. Leggings at first, then leather combat boots with the two straps and buckles. But the real sign of the Italian campaign soldier is the "armored unit" field jacket, with knitted neck, cuffs, and waist, an unwitting allusion to the treasured high-school athletic jacket. If the troops in Italy resemble a lot of bulky, dispirited, dirty, and scared high-school athletes, those in France and Germany, as the war proceeds, resemble padded automatons programmed less to prosecute hostilities than to defend themselves against freezing. Long, curiously formal overcoats together with gloves and wool scarves and knitted wool caps are the stigmata; even the helmets, with their shrimp nets, look padded and overdressed. At first, combat boots. Then, for the winter of 1944-45, clumsy black shoe-pacs, of the type made by L. L. Bean. Fir trees. Fog and snow. Barely holding on when the war was supposed to be over by Christmas. Instead of malaria, trench foot.

Like a hypertrophied organic thing, the war altered its appearance as it aged. At first soldiers looked like Thirties strike-breakers, with canvas leggings, flat World War I helmets, long bayonets, Springfield rifles, gas masks worn in the oddly chic triangular carrier under the arm; they looked pert and devoted and successful. Every soldier a Prewitt. Officers wear ostentatious insignia on shoulders. Bataan and Casserine Pass ended that look; thereafter carelessness and lack of sleep begin to dominate every gesture. The student of World War II photographs can spot that change from behind, in the hunch of shoulders (make yourself small), the helmet worn well down, the bend in the knees, scarves and mufflers hiding gold and silver collar insignia. Things get progressively thicker and less delicately defined. Faces vanish within helmets as eyes learn to look down, alert for the three little prongs of antipersonnel mines sprouting from the earth. The elegant, slender Springfield rifle thickens to the M-1, waists bulk out with more and more equipment. "Heavy duty" is the industrial idea that begins to dominate as the war itself, rather than its presumed purposes, takes over. It becomes a nonideological, self-running

enterprise, and increasingly it is about equipment and matériel.

Some things, however, never changed. Always the insufficiently armored tanks protected with rows of ad hoc sandbags stacked against the armor: this from the greatest steel-producing country in the world. The second-rate antitank mines, unstable in cold weather, which went off when you moved them or when truckloads of them encountered bumps. The showy gray-white cloud of smoke from American smokeless powder, which always gave your position away. The technologically pretentious little Handy-Talkie radios, optimistic but hopeless. The archaic Browning automatic rifle from World War I, heavy and inept and slow, with its insufficient magazine. All the result of failures of imagination or never-to-be-punished corruptions in procurement. The world's greatest industrial power left it to the Germans to devise the 88-mm gun, the most effective single weapon of the war, while as usual it disguised its defects of mind and invention with advertising: "The American soldier is the best-equipped in history." Actually, pathetic makeshift was the rule, from the hedgerow scoops welded onto tanks in Normandy to the white snow capes hastily run up by seamstresses in Nancy during the winter of 1945. Maybe the Air Corps was better served, with radar and "window." It was the "pore dump fucks" of the ground forces who were expected to shift for themselves while contemplating the operations of the American class system. As Jones says, "You might find a Princeton or Harvard graduate leading a forward infantry platoon, but it was rare. And you almost never found a Princeton or Harvard grad serving as a private in such a platoon."

It's the black and white of the photographs that brings it all back—better, it would sometimes seem, than the language of fiction or reporting. Perhaps this is because "news" photographs are the perfect medium for registering events of the twentieth century, events that have so often proved calamitous. Susan Sontag is not writing about war photographs, but what she says is sadly true of them: "Photographs state the innocence, the vulnerability of lives heading toward their own destruction, and this link between photography and death haunts all photographs of people."

The survivors of World War II are now pressing sixty. I hope the anonymous man with the shoulder bandage at Omaha is alive and well and that the man sitting on the ground at Ford Island has recovered his composure and that the little soldier eating off the back of the trailer in the cold has found a nice warm restaurant that he likes.

"In photographs blood is black, but truce flags and nurses' caps and hospital sheets are white."

THERE ARE THINGS I TELL TO NO ONE BUT TO THE POEM

by Galway Kinnell

1

There are things I tell to no one but to the poem.
Those close to me might suppose
I was sad, and try to comfort me, and be sad
themselves.
In a poem you sometimes read what a person tells
only to God.

2

I say 'God'—
I believe, rather, in a music
of grace, or gratefulness,
which sounds to us, sometimes,
from beyond happiness; and when
we hear it and let it flow
through our bodies, we live
these days lighted by their vanity
worshipping, as the other animals do, who live
and die in the spirit
of the end, this backward-spreading brightness.
It is a music which speaks in notes
struck or caressed or blown or plucked
off our own bodies: *remember
existence already remembers the flush
upon it you will have been—you who have reached out
ahead and taken up
some of the black dust we become, souvenir which
glitters in the bones of your hand already.*

3

Just as the supreme cry
of joy, the cry of orgasm, also has a ghastliness to it,
as though it touched forward
into the chaos where we break apart, so the death-cry,
sounding into our mouths from another direction, seems to
carry us back
to our first world, making the one whose throat aches
with it remember:
that small child
sturdy and fearless on first thinking of death,
on first seeing an old man or old woman sitting only yes-
terday on the once cluttered, now sadly tidy porch,
a little boned body drowsing almost unobserved into
the agreement to die.

4

Brothers and sisters,
lovers and children;
great mothers and grand fathers,
whose love-times have been spelled
already into stone; great
grand fetuses engraving
the past again into the flesh's waters:
can you bless—or not curse—
whatever struggles to stay alive

on this planet of struggles?
the nagleria eating the convolutions
out of the black pulp of thought?
the spirochete rotting down
the last temples of Eros, the last god?

Then the last cry in the throat
or only dreamed into it
by its threads too wasted to cry
will disappear into that music
of grace or gratefulness so full
it must invent God for release,
music which carries our time on earth away
on the great catafalque
of bones marrowed with god's-flesh,
thighs bruised by the blue flower,
pelvis that makes angels shiver to know down here
we mortals make love with our bones.

5

In this spirit
and from this spirit, I say to you
these things, which once I said only to the poem,
these wishes to live
and to die
in gratefulness, if in no other virtue.

For when the music sounds,
sometimes, late at night, a faint
clearest breath blowing
through the thinning walls of the darkness,
I do not feel sad, I do not miss the future or need
to be comforted.

Yes, I want to live forever.

I am like everyone. But when I hear
that breath coming through the walls,
grace-notes blown
out of the wormed-out bones,
music that their memory of blood
plucks from the straitened arteries,
that the hard cock and soaked cunt
caressed from each other
in the holy days of their vanity,
that the two hearts drummed
out of their ribs together,
the hearts that know everything (and even
the little knowledge they can leave
stays, to be the light of this house),

then it is not so hard
to go out, to turn and face
the spaces which gather into one music, I know now,
the singing of mortal lives, waves of spent existence
which flow toward, and toward, and on which we flow
and grow drowsy and become fearless again.

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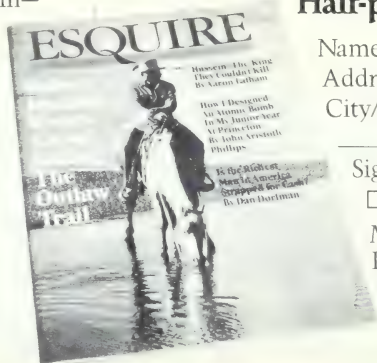
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MOVIES

GOOSEFLESH

The strange turn toward horror

by Ron Rosenbaum

IT WAS AT A midnight gathering of the bizarre *Rocky Horror Picture Show* cult that a solemn imprecation against the dread "anti-criminologist heresy" first gave me the notion that the recent resurgence of horror in popular culture is a religious revival at heart.

For months I had been immersing myself in the New Horror, trying to figure out why, suddenly, at the close of this confusing decade, movies, books, music, language itself have been invaded, possessed by mutant forms of the old horror classics, a surge so pervasive that popular horror seems ready to supplant sex and violence in the hierarchy of mass sensation-seeking.

From big-budget "possession" pictures like the remake of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, *The Exorcist*, I and II, *The Omen*, I and II, and *Magic of the Living Dead*, *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, *Halloween*) that attract regular congregations to midnight masses in suburban shopping-center cinemas, from the fascination with "real life" horror phenomena (the Loch Ness monster, "the Amityville horror," the Bermuda Triangle, the demons who "possessed" Son of Sam) to "horror rock" (Alice Cooper, Black

Sabbath, Kiss, songs like "Psycho-Killer" and "Werewolves of London"), from the sudden strange profusion of vampire revivals (four plays and five movies so far this year) to the proliferation of attenuated "gothics" in paperback publishing: horror is here with us again. Even the White House has been haunted, as witness the rhetoric of Watergate: Alexander Haig's "sinister outside force," John Mitchell's "White House horrors," Howard Hunt's night-stalking "spooks," a secret list of illegal campaign contributors maintained by the President's secretary and known as "Rosemary's Baby"; a cover-up, of course, is a premature burial, impeachment an exorcism.

Now, I myself had never been a big horror fan. As a child I'd fled the theater not long after the Martians landed in *War of the Worlds*. Whenever I would venture back to see a horror movie I'd end up regretting it, not so much because of what happened during the hour and a half of on-screen horror as because of what happened at home afterward: the images I'd seen would burrow into my

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nightmares, often haunting them for weeks. You can walk out of a movie theater, but in that nighttime theater of the mind you're always a captive audience. Nor had I ever understood the psychology of those who sought out horrors as if they were a supreme pleasure.

Nevertheless, when I began to see one new horror extravaganza after another play to frenzied full houses when horror books topped both the fiction and the nonfiction best-seller lists last year, when Stanley Kubrick announced his determination to make "the ultimate horror movie"—as if this were the unscaled aesthetic Everest—I decided to force myself to face the phenomenon again.

AND SO, after catching up on reruns of old standbys and seeing current favorites, I found myself sitting in the back row of a small cinema in New York City watching the strange ceremony preceding *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*, object of the most fanatic, most elaborate cult ever to develop out of the horror phenomenon.

The Rocky Show is a strange amalgam that employs the grotesque artifacts of the "creature features" of the



fities in order to pervert and parody
m in the decadent bisexual "glitter
ck" style of the early Seventies. (One
the opening musical numbers intro-
ces a "transvestite transsexual from
ansylvania.")

After a brief first-run release in
74, the *Rocky Show* came back from
a dead and began to develop a cult
following. Now, the midnight horror-
ovie cults are nothing new. Such
ms as *Night of the Living Dead*, *The*
exas Chainsaw Massacre, and other
mbie-psycho pictures that were con-
sidered too raw or shocking for regular
audiences ran for years on the mid-
night circuit. But the *Rocky Show*
phenomenon is a creature of another
ort. For one thing, audiences attending
iving Dead and *Chainsaw Massacre*
performances did not make it a point
to dress up as and impersonate the zo-
mies and psychos they saw on screen.
Rocky Show people not only wear the
costumes of the perverse protagonists
—they make it a point to memorize
every gesture and spend much of the
movie mimicking every move of their
chosen models. In addition, for most
people who see *Living Dead* one view-
ing is more than enough to last a life-
time, one chainsaw massacre satisfies
their appetite, but many *Rocky Show*
devotees have seen their movie liter-
ally hundreds of times. The size, the
seriousness, and the nationwide appeal
of the phenomenon is astonishing.

Every Saturday night the devotees
stand in line for hours to get a pre-
cious seat in the packed houses that
play the *Rocky Show*. They have the
dialogue on the sound track memo-
rized, and they have a whole complex
repertoire of anticipatory set-up lines
that they call out in unison and that
serve to turn the movie script into

punch lines for the audience's jokes.
They carry bags of rice to throw when
the on-screen wedding party throws
rice. They carry water pistols to squirt
each other when a thunderstorm breaks
on the haunted honeymoon night. It is
in part a ceremonial revenge of the
audience on the techniques of appre-
hension and anticipation that
"straight" horror films have used to
victimize them over the years. But it's
more, a full-fledged ritual: a mass, a
communion, a marriage of movie and
audience.

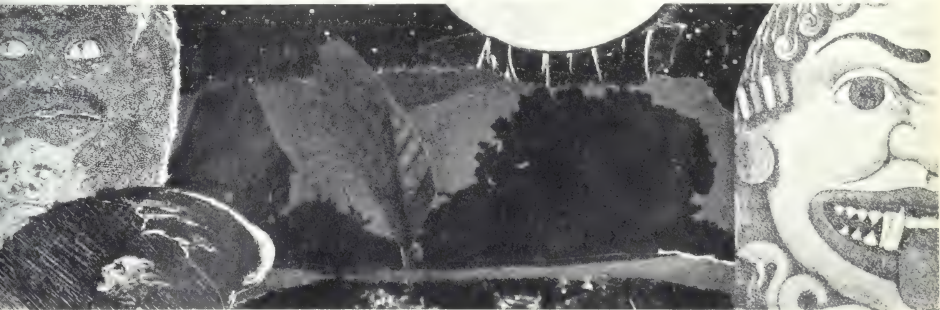
Most of the audience is college-age,
white, suburban. They look more like
future computer programmers than
like a decadent subculture. Before the
performance I attended, a chubby
young man wearing the leather-and-
feather costume of the movie's "trans-
vestite transsexual from Transylvania"
got up to welcome the faithful and the
newcomers. With quiet pride he an-
nounced that this was the 197th time
he'd attended the movie, citing several
previous theaters he'd haunted until
assuming the master-of-ceremonies post
here. Then he introduced several oth-
er of the devout who were marking
milestones—two 150ths, three 100ths—
and had them stand up in their cos-
tumes, to much applause.

Then finally there was the warning.
Since the attitude of the audience to
the players on the screen is an in-
tegral part of the *Rocky Show* cere-
mony—some are consistently ridiculed,
others cheered, others treated with a
precise mixture of both—it is most
essential that the correct attitudes be
maintained, the master of ceremonies
emphasized. "Those of you who have
attended performances at other the-
aters should be aware," he announced
solemnly, "that here at the Eighth

Street Theater we do not boo the
criminologist."

That's when it came to me. Behind
that simple request was the specter of
heresy, blasphemy. Somewhere tonight
at another theater (read "denomina-
tion") monstrously blasphemous here-
sies were being committed. Somewhere
tonight there were traitors to the faith
actually booing the criminologist.
Needless to say, the fear of heresy
presupposes an organized religion, and
the *Rocky Horror Picture Show* cult,
I realized, was a mutant form of or-
ganized religion, each audience a con-
gregation with its elaborately robed epis-
copate and acolytes to celebrate a mid-
night mass that was less satanic than
sophomoric, but utterly serious for all
that. The pre-scripted lines the au-
dience called out were like the respon-
sive readings of a congregation to a
holy text. The absurdity of the passion
play on screen was less important than
the state of ecstatic communion the
audience worked itself into while watch-
ing. From that point I began to pay
more attention to the audiences attend-
ing "ordinary" horror movies. The
behavior of these more informal con-
gregations in almost every respect
mimics that of a congregation at a
Holy Roller church.

The imminent manifestation of the
Holy Ghost will, in Pentecostal
churches, be signaled by the whispers
and chatter of nervous anticipation,
cries of apprehension, shouts at the
Presence, shrieks of possession, speak-
ing in tongues. So, too, whenever
you sit in a horror-movie audience
the approach of the moment of horror
is accompanied by nervous cries of
"Watch out!" "It's in there!" At the
moment of horror these are succeeded
by shrieks, shudders, convulsive jump-



Karen Lee Grant

ing up and down in seats. Whether the spirits that possess them happen to be Holy or Unholy, it is a religious experience. At a showing of *Halloween* the group in front of me kept shrieking "Oh God" for a full five minutes after one of the most shocking moments; next to me at *Dawn of the Dead* a middle-aged man kept moaning, "Oh Jesus, oh Jesus" over and over again after the first zombie attack. In *The Exorcist* and all the best horror-mock classics it was the audience that acted as if it were possessed. The *Rocky Horror Show* is merely a structured version of these spontaneous outpourings.

WHAT EXACTLY is it about the experience of horror that allows it to serve as a source of this grossly masked revivalism? What does it offer that the more conventional communions of organized religion do not supply? Before looking into possible explanations, it is essential to clear up some common confusion about what we mean when we talk of horror.

First of all, there's a difference between fear and horror. Let me tell you a story that might illuminate that difference. It was on New Year's Eve last that, in pursuit of total immersion in horror for the purposes of this story, I persuaded a companion to accompany me to a 10 P.M. showing of the new *Invasion of the Body Snatchers* at a huge movie palace just north of Times Square.

Body Snatchers, a voluptuous and hypnotic horror shocker, was drawing to a close just as the old year was approaching its final midnight. Spellbound, we watched as the last humans left alive were stalked by the once-human bodies now possessed by sinister pod plants. Suddenly from behind us shouts broke out up in the balcony.

Now this was a New Year's Eve audience, and throughout the movie the usual horror-show shouts and shrieks had been even more boisterous than is customary, but this new outbreak from the balcony was different: angry, menacing. Soon it cohered into a mean mob chant. We turned around and saw a gang of two dozen or so youths jogging across the top of the balcony, many brandishing sticks and

clubs. Still the horror trance had us in its hypnotic grip and we returned our attention to the screen.

That's when shouts of rage and cries of pain erupted. This time we turned around and saw the entire gang clambering down the balcony seats toward us, grabbing purses and possessions, beating people who resisted. And this time a surge of fear shocked us out of our trance and we began a panicked rush for the exits: **WOLFPACKS TERRORIZE TIMES SQUARE** read the headline next morning.

And so here's the difference: Horror seduced us to stay; fear finally forced us to run. Fear mobilizes; horror immobilizes, entrances, enralls, fascinates. Few would pay to be frightened by "wolfpacks" and purse snatchers, but millions pay to be horrified by werewolves and body snatchers.

I think we can find clues to this paradox if we distinguish further between the fear and the horror response. One frequently finds them confused in discussions of popular culture. *Jaws*, for instance, is not a horror movie. A disaster movie, an epic of fear and shock, but not horror. The fear of big ugly things that bite is not horror. In the same way most "horror" movies like *Alien* are not so much horror stories as they are stories about big sharks from outer space, big sharks from beneath the black lagoon, and big sharks from the year one million B.C.—scary perhaps, but not the essence of pure horror. What about vampire movies, of which we are seeing a sudden vogue? Are they (as the ads for the *Rocky Show* suggest) merely about "a different set of Jaws"? Yes and no.

In vampire, werewolf, and zombie movies, there is the superficial *Jaws*-like fear of being attacked, but the genuine horror in them is the fear not of being bitten by one but of becoming one—the ancient horror of metamorphosis. Ovid's classical catalogue of metamorphoses is filled with poignant and horrified cries of the selves within the shapes as they are transformed, cries that testify to the shocked and painful survival of human identity within bizarre forms. We are horrified by the bite of a vampire, not because it hurts or will make us die, but because it transforms us into one of the undead. The horror in metamorphosis is less about the fear of dying than it

is about the fear of not dying and having to suffer horrific consciousness for a deathless eternity.

The distinction between the element that make for fear and those that create horror holds true for the possession and psycho-horror categories of the genre. We fear the advent of the devil, the awfulness of the possessed person, but the horror is at the idea of being possessed oneself. We fear the malicious madness of the psychotic killer stalking his prey, but lurking beneath that fear is the horror that we might "go psycho" ourselves, imprison ourselves in a world of perpetual nightmare.

There is also a subtle but significant difference between the horror inherent in metamorphosis and that of the possession/psycho variety. In the former the horror is of a self remaining intact but trapped within an alien metamorphosed exterior. In dramas of possession and psychosis, on the other hand, the external appearance most frequently remains the same; it is the self, the identity within, the will, the soul that is dispossessed, enslaved, or obliterated.

One of the signal characteristics of the current horror revival is this shift in the spectrum of subsets of the genre to these tales of the imperiled interior self. The original horror movies of the Twenties and Thirties depended for their impact on external grotesquerie—of size, beastliness, or physiognomy. During the war years of the Forties the genre went into a decline, as evidenced by such parodies as *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*; "suspense" and "thrillers" took up the emotional slack left by the departed "chillers." The "horror movie" was born again after Hiroshima and the first big UFO scare in 1949, as the invisible metamorphosing power of radiation spawned giant ants, mutant lizards, Godzilla, Rodan, and other monsters made in Japan (or, metaphorically, in Hiroshima) and saucer sightings unleashed a wave of movies about monsters from outer space, most of which looked remarkably like the ones that crawled out of the middle of the earth. The Sixties saw another decline in the horror show—in quantity if not quality (Hitchcock's *Psycho* and *The Birds* are haunting exceptions)—one that lasted until the birth of *Rosemary's Baby* in 1968 and the huge popular success of *Th*

orist—as book in 1971 and as movie in 1973. Indeed, there may be some justification in speculating that the rious offscreen horrors of the Forties d Sixties surfeited the appetite for onscreen sensation.

Revisiting *The Exorcist* recently, I am surprised that from this temporal stance it can be seen as a movie out the Sixties. In the background the film, urban riots, campus collisions, unleashed libidos hint that a film is less the story of the possession of the body of one adolescent girl than it is the story of the possession

the body politic by the convulsive changes of the Sixties. To uncomprehending parents of that turbulent a the sudden transformation of their ogy into obscenity-spouting, blasphemous pagans might just as well have been demonic possession.

It's very tempting to read societal implications into horror-show content. One could, for instance, make a case at the recent plague of vampire reakes, takeoffs, and put-ons reflects our national horror at the oil shortage and the haunted vampiric self-image created by our thirst to tap ore and more pipelines for our industrial lifeblood.) But there is something about the Seventies' obsession with the self and "human potential" that makes possession of the self a fascinating social metaphor. In fact, the horror revival may be looked upon on the level as the dark side of the human-potential movement.

The assumption of the therapies associated with that movement is that, once freed of internal and external restraints, the self will be free to grow and fulfill itself. The unstated assumption is that it will grow into something better, something benevolent. The pod people in *Body Snatchers* use humanitarian rhetoric to explain to the last humans in San Francisco that, by acquiescing to their fate and allowing themselves to become re-created by alien vegetables, they will be "evolving to a higher plane." The body snatchers are really mind snatchers, and in the end make them the first human-potential monsters—mellow zombies.

As the zombie-like products of cult conversions, the Krishnas and Moonies in our midst, will attest, we don't need alien vegetable spores to transform us—we already have within us that potential. No longer do monsters from

the outside dominate horror movies; instead the monsters are within us, or we become them. The message of the invaders-from-outer-space horror films used to be that we can't trust aliens. Now we learn we can trust space visitors (cf. *Close Encounters* and "Mork and Mindy"); we just can't trust ourselves.

THERE HAS BEEN another change in the horror genre in its more recent manifestations.

Not just in the nature of the beast but in the fundamental form of the fable itself. Specifically, there has been a curious mutation in the way horror stories end. Increasingly the evil, the irrational, the horror is triumphant, while the forces of reason, hope, humanity suffer sickening defeat. While this is not without precedent (in the sixteenth century Spenser allowed the *Faerie Queen* to end with the escape of that dread monster, the Blatant Beast), the conventions of the genre have until now called for reassurance and restoration of order at the close.

The endings of the eighteenth-century Gothic horror stories followed an invariable pattern: the villain or agent of horror is subjected to a final defeat in some ways as horrifying as the torments he has inflicted on the innocents in the course of the tale.* But something has happened to this rule.

In the 1956 version of *Body Snatchers* the hero escapes the clutches of the outer-space pods and manages to get to the FBI, which we are led to believe will result in the undoing of the invaders. In the new version the hero succumbs; we are meant to believe the human species is doomed to extinction by the pod plague. The

* See Philip Hallie's study of the eighteenth-century Gothic novel, *The Paradox of Cruelty* (Wesleyan University Press, 1969). As late as 1965, in a survey of science-fiction horror films, Susan Sonntag wrote that "the rule, of course, is that this horrible and irremediable form of murder can strike anyone in the film except the hero....; by the end of the film the invaders have been repulsed or destroyed." This follows the pattern set by the horror films of the Thirties, Sonntag says. "The mad or obsessed scientist who creates a monster... is himself destroyed, often recognizing his folly himself and dying in the successful effort to destroy his own creation."

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despairing end is the hallmark of the major films of the horror revival that began in the early Seventies. The triumph of the devil in *Rosemary's Baby* was an extraordinary shock because of its departure from tradition, a climax that did not go unnoted by Charles Manson, who had a demonic shock in store for *Rosemary's* director, Roman Polanski. *Night of the Living Dead* and its high-budget sequel, *Dawn of the Dead*, end with the gore-crazed zombies horrifyingly triumphant. *Halloween*, last year's cult shocker, delivers one final corkscrew twist of terror when the vicious escaped-lunatic slasher who has terrorized a suburban community turns out to be no mere psychotic killer but "more than 'human'"—invulnerable to the bullets we thought had finally struck him down.

In the "true life" *Amityville Horror* (a nonfiction best-seller now a major motion picture, et cetera), a family moves into a huge old suburban house and soon finds itself intermittently haunted and possessed by a malevolent resident spirit. Halfway through the book a sympathetic parish priest is summoned for help—the similarities to *The Exorcist* are, well, uncanny—and

we begin to expect that, as in *The Exorcist*, he will do battle with the demon. Instead, the demon scares off the priest, who flees the parish. The unchecked spirit proceeds to paralyze the family—and the reader—with terror. Whatever the source of the spirit, the rout of the priest is the most demoralizing aspect of the story. Evil utterly undermines his confidence in the power of his faith—although one has to suspect that the poor parson saw *The Exorcist* and had his eagerness to do battle with the demon enfeebled by a fearful awareness of the demise of the priest in the movie.

Does the popularity of these despairing and demoralizing denouements reflect some longing in the collective psyche of the horror audience to succumb, to be possessed? Could the same kind of longing that drives so many to surrender themselves to the possession offered by communal religious cults drive others to the more temporary communal possessions offered in the secular temples that show horror pictures? At this deepest level the horror phenomenon is more than a conservative critique of liberation and human-potential movements; it is a re-

ligious phenomenon. A closer look at the physiology of horror provides revealing clue to the connection.

ONE OF THE most ingenious gimmicks used to hype horror shows in the mid-Fifties was the conspicuous position of an ambulance outside the movie house, supplemented by a registered nurse in uniform or a paramedic stationed at the popcorn stand in the lobby, presumably to attend to all cases of cardiac arrest liable to be caused by the horror show playing. I'd always thought these precautions were purely promotional, but a quick scan of the medical literature reveals that the possibility of being "scared death" is a rare but nonetheless genuine phenomenon. A minor controversy over the question erupted in British and American medical journals in the Fifties and Sixties and was summarized in a monograph called *Scared Death*, by John C. Baker, who produced the following five possibilities for fear-shock death:

- overactivity of the sympatho-adrenal system leading to a state of shock caused by sudden release of adrenalin
- parasympathetic stimulation resulting in a cardiac arrest from vagal inhibition;
- sudden hemodynamic alteration associated with sudden increase of systemic venous return;
- paroxysmal ventricular tachycardia terminating in ventricular fibrillation
- overexuberant oxygen-consuming reflex.

It is important to keep in mind that these "scared to death" reactions are extreme manifestations of fear, not horror. While such moments are often to be found, and are often the superficial climaxes of many works of "horror," the physiology of horror itself is a more subtle and distinctive state.

The word had a physiological meaning before it came to be applied to emotional response. The Latin verb *horre* means "to stand on end, bristle" and, in its early entry in English, referred to the way the hair on the back of the neck stands on end under certain stimuli, as well as to the rough, enridged appearance of the bristling hackles. In some cases in the Middle Ages it was applied to the ridges of waves in a rough sea. And

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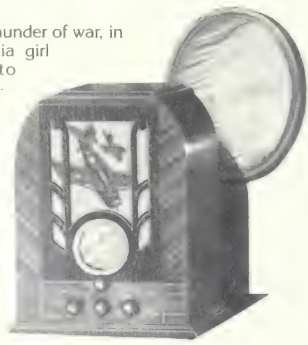
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ne senses the essence of the word is reference to wavelike phenomena: the wavelike effect of the repeated sound of the word, to the wavelike form of the shivers and shudders that accompany bristling and characterize the more emotional forms of terror.

This strong physiological root of our sense of horror persists in the still current zoological term *horripilation*, which is "the erection of the hairs on the skin by contraction of the cutaneous muscles... producing the condition known as gooseflesh." The *Oxford English Dictionary* cites a description of the physical effects of ghost stories "flesh horripilated by a thought." And this is a key distinction: Fear produced by an external object or event. Horror is produced by *thought*. The horripilation we experience upon entering a strange dark place is not about anything we can perceive in the ordinary sense but from the thought, the idea, of the presence of a being or thing invisible to us. This gooseflesh, the spirit is similar in its physical manifestation to what the religious believer feels in the presence of his higher Being: awe, enchantment, enrapturement, mystery, dread—it is here at the rhetorics of religion and horror begin to merge. In fact, it is the thesis of the German theologian Rudolf Otto that in the evolution of spiritual consciousness the shudder of horror distinguishes man from beast and gives birth to religious feeling.

Otto's pioneering study in the history of religion, *The Idea of the Holy*, attempts to demonstrate that feelings "the uncanny," the "weird," of "demonic dread," of "awe" are the emotional raw material out of which faith in higher beings arises. And that horripilation, and the shudders and shivers that characterize that physiological state, are not merely peripheral accessories to our sensory apparatus but the source of the most profound mystical and visionary religious experiences.

IF HORROR is becoming religion, it's interesting to watch the way religion is being transmuted into horror these days.

Take a curious recent cinematic creation called *The Late Great Planet Earth*. It's based on the work of Hal Lindsay, a best-selling paperback

prophet who finds literal confirmation of the fantastic horrors described in the Book of Revelations in the crisis of contemporary life—pollution, famine, radiation, and war are the four horsemen; the battle of Armageddon is brewing in the broils of the Middle East, et cetera. What makes the movie of this apocalypse-mongering so symptomatic of the transformation of the horror genre is its voice-over narration by Orson Welles. Forty years ago Welles paralyzed the nation with the horror of his invaders-from-Mars radio hoax; now he presides over a work that shifts the locus of the source of horror from the Red Planet to the Right Hand of God, and might well be titled "Invaders from God."

The Book of Revelations also serves as the basic test for *The Omen*, wherein a baby is discovered not merely to be the child of the devil, as in *Rosemary's Baby*, but specifically the Antichrist of Revelations. Once again, as in the original chiliastic consciousness of the country's colonizers, the ultimate monster is the Antichrist, and the ultimate in the hierarchy of horror is not fear of an alien but fear of God. It was Kierkegaard who pointed out in his essay on the concept of dread that more dreadful than the fear of evil is the fear of the Good, the fear that there is a good, there is a Judgment, an absolute against which we must therefore define ourselves.

In addition to these explicitly biblical horror sources, there has emerged in recent years a new form of religious horror that might be called the Revenge of Repressed Paganism. Not paganism in the modern sense of hedonistic and irreverent behavior, but paganism in the sense of reverence for an older, more primitive and horrifying, more uncanny and dreadful form of worship. In *The Last Wave*, for instance, a liberal Australian lawyer finds his nightmares and then his waking life invaded by a mesmerizing aboriginal holy man, finds himself unable to resist following his fascination to a fearful and final fulfillment. In *The Wicker Man*, a "midnight" movie particularly popular on the West Coast, a sober, puritanical police inspector is seduced into a Stone Age human-sacrifice ceremony on an island inhabited by disguised Druids. *Halloween*—the East Coast favorite—is a shockingly successful effort to strip the secular su-

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perficacity of suburban trick-or-treating from the October holiday and restore to it the dread due the celebration of All Hallow's Eve.

In each of these movies the slickness and banality of modern society is seen as but a thin and precarious veneer insulating rational consciousness from an aboriginal interior appetite, a horror-hunger that longs to be satisfied with nightmarish sensationalism.

Numerous speculations of twentieth-century psycho-synthesizers have offered schematic models to trace the locus of this religious horror-hunger. Freud found monsters emerging from the id, Jung had them arising from the collective unconscious; more recently Julian Jaynes and other dual-hemisphere brain theorists see demons and demonic voices, along with the commands of gods and prophets, springing from the right, or nondominant, side of the brain, while Carl Sagan sees the "dragons of Eden" that haunt our myths and folklore arising from the reptilian limbic brain stem that lurks beneath rational consciousness. One of my favorite nonscientific but nevertheless illuminating myths has been devised by a post-punk-rock group from Akron, Ohio, called Devo (after their concept of "de-evolution"). The Devo theory is that man is a monster by comparison with any other life form, that we are descended from a demented tribe of killer apes that began slaying and eating the brains of other apes, causing their own brains to swell disproportionately to any ethical faculties, thereby producing such monstrosities of civilization as, for instance, Akron, Ohio, and Devo itself.

Although the notion may not stand up to the scrutiny of evolutionary genetics, metaphorically the Devo myth suggests that consciousness itself can be a poison, that it is possible to overdose on too much brain, too much sensibility, in the same way that too much LSD can lead to nightmarish internal horror shows.

All of these theories bespeak a unanimous distrust of the strength and character of the much-maligned brain, of everyday consciousness, which is either seen as the thinnest of oil slicks shimmering on top of a tidal wave of the numinous, or disparagingly characterized as a dull clerk, a besieged bureaucrat, a timid stay-at-home who resists the thrills, the shudders, the

transports and rapture he pitifully tries to catalogue in his limited filing system.

The much-beleaguered petty brain of everyday consciousness is constantly seen as being pushed perilously close to the point of no return—the New Horror cultivates not merely horror but the horror of horror itself, the horror of being driven into madness by sheer horror. In *The Shining*, for instance, a novel by Stephen King, one of the new masters of the form, characters are always approaching potentially horrific experiences (a locked door, a lonely boiler room, et cetera) wondering if what they'll encounter therein will render them permanently insane because it overloads the very capacity of the cortex to tolerate the intensity of the experience. The lore of fraternity and secret-society initiations is filled with tales of initiates forced to spend a night alone at a gravestone and found the following morning, faces frozen into a fearful spasm, their minds frozen into permanent catatonia, not necessarily by what they saw, but by the unendurable horror of what they might see.

AFTER SPENDING all this time submerged in horror, once again I began to wonder whether there might not be some genuine menace in the horror genre, whether, in fact, horror had grown so technically sophisticated and powerful in its manipulation of emotions and images that it might create nightmares in the waking world. Who can say that Charles Manson, who saw himself as the child of the devil, was not influenced in his speculations by *Rosemary's Baby*? And isn't there even more evidence to support the speculation that David "Son of Sam" Berkowitz was influenced by *The Exorcist*? Did he come up with the notion that he was possessed by a 6,000-year-old demon all by himself, or was the seed of his madness planted and nurtured by possession pictures like *The Exorcist*? What else but the popularity of such films and the pervasiveness of the notion of possession could have convinced him against all reason that the mass of Americans would understand his plea of involuntary possession and therefore absolve him of having to account for his actions. All he ever wanted was to be exorcised, he would tell

psychiatrists in prison.

That's silly, defenders of *The Exorcist* might say, "Sam" missed a point of the movie, he got carried away. But isn't "getting carried away" how people pay to see horror shows? How do we know, defenders might join, that the cathartic satisfaction of seeing movies about horror might not have forestalled perpetration of actual horrors by dozens of potential Sams?

While I don't find the image of demons of potential Sams out there attending horror movies particularly comforting, the debate is probably unresolvable as the one about whether pornography causes rape. Nevertheless, those who laughed three decades ago when social psychiatrist Frederick Wortham advocated censorship of monster magazines because of the unwholesome effects they could have on the psyches of young children might just be underestimating the power of the genre and overestimating the protective insulation that separates sane from psychosis. Horror can be a powerful drug, and few of the most enthusiastic advocates of the blissful benefits of LSD would slip it to a child and then try to scare him out of his mind.

I was hoping that in doing this story I would discover that I had gotten over what I thought was a childish fear of horror. Instead, despite my knowledge that the horror phenomenon is something concocted by sophisticated manipulators of word, image, and formula, that the makers of horror are like scientists applying time-tested formulas to evoke predictable responses from laboratory rats, I still retain a deep distrust not merely of the darkness without, but of the which might be evoked within. I am convinced that rationality is a precarious illusion, a fragile construct that deserves insulation from deliberate exposure to horror. Perhaps you are more secure in your rationality, your faith in reason and the enlightenment more strongly anchored, and more power to you for it. From the evidence of the popular passion for horror, I have a feeling that the all too brief day of enlightenment has reached its dusk and once again we sit crouching in our caves, watching the flicker on its walls, horripilated at the thought of what the night will bring.

STYRON'S HEAVY FREIGHT

x. Guilt, and the Holocaust too

by John W. Aldridge

DEAS HAVE, for the most part, been poorly served in the American novel. We have had, to be sure, many works of high rhetorical pretentiousness, crowded with vividly rendered experience, promising significance on every page, but seldom deigning anything weightier than the accrued poundage of their pages. We have had other works of great lyrical density and still others of the most corrosive social criticism and satire, in which we may learn all about the stresses and stupidities of American life but almost nothing about what it means.

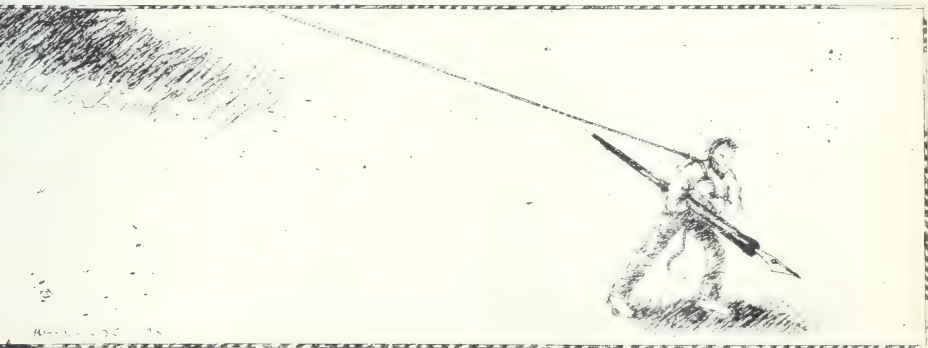
Our novels have usually lacked what the best of European fiction has traditionally possessed in abundance: the power to deal directly with abstract concepts of being—in the largest sense, with ideas—and to depict ideas as concrete modes of dramatic action to be experienced with all the force of physical sensations. For reasons that may derive from the peculiarities of our national history and psychology, American novelists have rarely been able to extrapolate from the immediate and actual predicaments of their characters

to the general human truths that they may typify—in the way, for example, that Flaubert could create out of the tragedy of one bored provincial housewife a universal portrait of the bourgeois mind, or Dostoevsky out of the sufferings of a poor student a classic study of the psychology of guilt, or Tolstoy out of the disparate lives of some Russian aristocrats the history of an entire epoch. We have had *The Scarlet Letter* but no *Madame Bovary* or *Crime and Punishment*, *Moby Dick* but no *War and Peace*—we have had novels, that is, possessing a certain kind of greatness, but their significance so often seems confined, even when they strain for allegorical generalization, within the limits of the particular situations they dramatize. The result is that they finally seem to be about personal guilt rather than the force of evil, individual failure rather than the tragedy of human existence. It is possible that American novelists are by na-

ture limited to the specific and particular, that they have sensations or at best perceptions instead of ideas, and that they write most convincingly when they are absolved of the obligation of having to think.

WILLIAM STYRON seems to me an excellent case in point. It is not so much that he is unable to express his ideas through his fiction as that he seems not to have ideas to express. Like Thomas Wolfe, the literary predecessor he most closely resembles, Styron has a natural storyteller's gift for narrative, but he has the greatest difficulty finding ways to make his material meaningful. This has been particularly burdensome for Styron because, while there is little to indicate that he is a writer struggling to express something that the critics can describe as "a major vision of life," he has all along given the appearance of being driven by the most intense ambition to achieve a major reputation, and he knows that to do this he must possess recognizably major themes. He

John W. Aldridge, a professor of English at the University of Michigan, is the author of After the Lost Generation, The Devil in the Fire, and several other books of literary and social criticism.



seems, therefore, to have tried to assimilate into his work elements conventionally associated with the presence of something significant to say. He writes in a style that has come to be recognized, at least in the literary establishment, as the traditional style of our native form of important fiction. It is grandly rhetorical, seemingly always portentous of some large and apocalyptic meaning, redolent with atmosphere, swollen with adjectival bloat, and most effective when it is at work on the experience of the South as previously processed by the imagination of William Faulkner.

Styron's dramatic situations are also those indemnified by past literary usage as serious and important. He is particularly infatuated with situations that lend themselves to epic or sentimental orchestration, that will resonate most forebodingly with the deepest totalities of disaster and doom—murder, suicide, insanity, rape, incest, miscegenation, ancestral blood-guilt, generalized corruption and betrayal, the kind of materials that served Faulkner so well just because they were inseparable from the cultural and moral derangement of his southern characters. But Styron's handling of them they seem to exist as mere theatrics. They constantly generate promises of meaning far larger than the capacity of his characters to fulfill them.

But it is obvious that to be considered major a writer must not only appear to be engaging major themes. He must also engage them at the right time, when the public for one reason or another will find them topical or intellectually fashionable.

Styron had the good fortune to publish his widely praised first novel, *Lie Down in Darkness*, a Gothic melodrama about a girl driven to suicide by father-fixation and mother-hatred, in 1952, at just the moment when it could be read as the last flowering of the southern novel after Faulkner, a brilliant synthesis of all the elements of southern fiction at the culmination of its renaissance following World War II. The fact that most of these elements had by this time hardened into stereotypes worked in Styron's favor because it enabled general readers to admire the novel for qualities that they could readily recognize as belonging to an established literary tradition, but one

that had ceased long ago to disturb them with original thought.

Something rather different occurred with the appearance in 1960 of Styron's second novel, *Set This House on Fire*, a long, meandering work that appeared to represent an effort to exploit literary sensibility for its own sake. Styron tried to give coherence and meaning to his attenuated story—which had to do with some troubled people involved in a mysterious murder case—through windy adumbrations of existential angst, the Big Questions about "being" and "nothingness" that Sartre and Camus had a good while before made popular. But by the time Styron finished the novel—and he writes very slowly—the fashion had passed, and the intellectuals whose goodwill the book seemed intended to court savaged it for being out of date as well as for shamming a significance it did not and could not deliver.

By contrast, the publication of *The Confessions of Nat Turner* in 1967 nicely coincided with the furor then being generated by the civil rights movement. But Styron's error in that novel was political as well as artistic. His portrait of slave-insurrectionist Turner infuriated many black writers because it seemed to them the height of arrogance for a southern white to disregard important facts about Turner's life and character and to produce a fictionalized account that not only distorted the truth but was clearly racist in point of view. Nevertheless, the book was sensational and titillating enough to survive a controversy that very nearly became a scandal.

WHEN HE CONCEIVED the plan for his new novel, *Sophie's Choice*,* Styron could well have had grounds for believing that this time there was absolutely no way he could lose, and I must confess that, however critical I have been of his previous work here and elsewhere, I came to this book with some hope that Styron had at last found a way of dealing successfully with his materials, which appeared to be extremely promising. After all, he chose as his central subject the most calamitous event of modern history, the systematic murder of Nazi

* Published in June by Random House; 515 pages, \$12.95.

concentration camp inmates, and he could be reasonably certain that interest in the Holocaust would persist no matter how long it took him to finish the book. He also had a fair amount of southern experience, and he had in addition the story of his early years as a writer when he was struggling to write the novel that became *Lie Down in Darkness* and was fired from his job with McGraw-Hill for floating plastic bubbles out of a window on the twentieth floor of a building.

Styron also had a somewhat shabby worn but nonetheless great potential theme, the question of responsibility for the Nazi atrocities and in particular the guilt of those who survived them, a theme certified to be great by important thinkers like Hannah Arendt, Bruno Bettelheim, George Steiner, and others. Taking it all together, Styron had the makings of a rich, heavy brew that seemed guaranteed to give off the aroma of grand significance for a good while to come.

As he did in his previous novel, Styron tries in *Sophie's Choice* to create suspense by resorting to the form of the detective story, a form well suited to the writer who wishes to explore a complicated mystery to its ingenious solution, but that can also be adapted to the purposes of a writer seeking to generate a counterfeit effect of complication out of materials that are in themselves so shallow that he can imagine no other way of making them seem significant. Styron's strategy is to gather together great masses of material having to do with people whose behavior seems strange or inexplicable and then scrutinize every last scrap of information about them as if it were a vital clue to a puzzle that he holds himself interminably on the point of being about to solve. This involves him in an activity that he obviously enjoys above all other things and that more vividly demonstrates his quality as a writer: the dogged documentation of absolutely everything, vast marathons of descriptions that go on and on and always have behind them the implication that some wondrous profundity will at any moment be divulged to a stunned world.

In the opening sections of the novel we are introduced to Stingo, Styron's narrator-persona, a character seemingly without thematic relevance to the

ain action but whose presence in the novel may be justified by the fact that Styron appears to have wanted to work his early literary and sexual experiences into the story and at the same time had need of a narrator. The suspenseful questions about Stingo are whether he will manage without regular income to keep going as a writer and whether he will finally find a woman willing to relieve him of his virginity. Styron is able to protract an examination of these questions through large part of the novel, artfully maintaining suspense by pausing from time to time to explore segments of another character's experience, an exercise in nonsequential narrative that helps to enhance the overall effect of serious complication.

It turns out that Stingo's survival as a writer is for the time being assured by a most remarkable happenstance, one that must be the purest example of Southern Gothic moonshine to appear in our literature since the fiction of Thomas Nelson Page. Stingo learns that he has come into a small inheritance left him by his grandmother, whose father had received the money from the sale of a slave just before the Civil War. The legacy had for all those years been bricked up in a cubbyhole in the basement of the family house in North Carolina until Stingo's father had discovered its whereabouts. Thus, Stingo is saved for literature by the miraculous intervention of an ancestral *deus ex machina* and is freed to devote his spare time to seeking a solution to his sexual dilemma.

This proves to be exceedingly difficult. He has encounters with two young women, Leslie and Mary Alice, and much later is able to get to bed with the novel's heroine, the beautiful Sophie. But before that happens he is very nearly driven mad by Leslie and Mary Alice. It seems that Leslie is exclusively linguistically erotic and will permit only French kissing, while she and Stingo indulge in hour after tongue-aching hour. Mary Alice will allow him to take no liberties with her person whatsoever, but is quite willing to gratify him by hand, which she does in a pleasureless and perfunctory fashion. While there is a certain dismal comedy in all this, just what it has to do with the central story of Sophie is never made clear, evidently because Styron does not know.

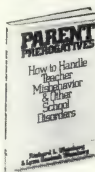
SOPHIE COMES into Stingo's life after he moves into a room beneath hers in a Brooklyn boardinghouse. He is repeatedly awakened by the noise of savage copulation above him, and of course in his condition he becomes each time crazed with lust. Considerable suspense is developed over whether the ceiling will fall in on Stingo and just who the frenzied performers may be. Finally, he learns that they are Sophie, a Polish girl who has survived Auschwitz, and Nathan, a New York Jew who has nursed Sophie back to health after her ordeal and who claims to be a scientist. Stingo soon befriends the lovers and from then on becomes more and more deeply preoccupied with trying to penetrate the meaning of their strange, contradictory relationship.

He is particularly mystified by the sudden and seemingly unprovoked shifts in Nathan's moods. Nathan and Sophie will be making riotous love, and immediately afterward he will fall into a screaming rage, beat her bloody, and denounce her for having done something reprehensible in order to survive Auschwitz. This kind of behavior or some variation on it is repeated over and over again, to Stingo's steadily accelerating mystification, until at last Nathan's rage has been inflated into a force of seemingly cosmic vengeance and Sophie's guilty secret is made to seem as blackly criminal as the Holocaust itself. In fact, so much melodramatic voltage is generated not only by Nathan's violence and Stingo's anguish over it but by the soaring grandiloquence of Styron's prose that one might suppose the stage were being set for a performance of *Götterdämmerung*.

But it is through such pyrotechnics evidently calculated to arouse expectations of the deepest tragedy and evil (what, in the name of Heaven, did Sophie do?) that Styron attempts to justify devoting so much space to a detailed documentation of: Sophie's life in Poland before the war; the happiness of her childhood; the unhappiness of her marriage; the arrest and execution of her father and her husband by the Nazis; the birth of her two children; the crime for which she was sent to Auschwitz (she had been caught smuggling a ham into Warsaw); her experiences in the camp; her life in the household of the camp

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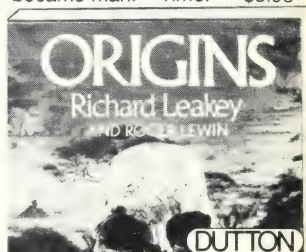
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commandant; her relations with other inmates; the lesbian attacks made upon her by various women; her separation from her children and the presumed execution of her daughter; the allied liberation of the camp. And throughout the narrative Styron is careful to drop periodic hints that if the reader will just stay with him, the unspeakable truth will come out.

But the fact is that Sophie's story is a windy record of Styron's apparent search for some way to legitimize the direful promises of his rhetoric, the extreme intensity of Nathan's wrath, the whole elaborate orchestration of Stingo's anguish, and Sophie's justifiable damnation. For the truth about her supposed sin, when it finally does emerge, represents not only a terrible anticlimax but an abdication of authorial responsibility, and the reader has every right to feel defrauded. If Sophie has sinned at all, her sin is at most venial and in the circumstances altogether understandable. Upon her arrival at Auschwitz she was forced by a drunken SS officer to decide whether her son or her daughter would be sent to the gas chamber. Sophie's choice was to save her son, but since she was forced to choose, the culpability belonged to the officer and not to her. Later, she had been able, because of her stenographic skills, to do clerical work for the camp commandant and so had escaped execution. She had also, in the hope of saving her son's life, offered herself to her employer, but he refused her. After he was transferred out of the camp, she suffered just as much as any of the other survivors.

Nathan really has no grounds for his suspicion of her and no justification for abusing her, particularly since Sophie has told him nothing about either her "choice" or her relations with the commandant. Furthermore, Nathan, after having been blown up by Styron into a kind of vengeful Old Testament Jehovah, is revealed to be nothing of the sort. He is, we discover, quite simply a paranoid schizophrenic and drug addict who has been lying about the important scientific work he is supposed to have been doing and whose goal is to persuade Sophie to join him in a suicide pact. Her second "choice" of death, therefore, seems not an act of atonement or a guilt that, after all, she lacks

sufficient reason for having, but an indication that finally she is as insane as he is.

With Nathan's role as a force of retributive fatality invalidated, and Sophie's sin, if any, revealed to be small, the novel is deprived of all ethical and thematic rationale, and its great length would seem to be a reflection of Styron's hope that if he described his characters and their actions through a sufficient quantity of pages he would sooner or later blunder on his theme.

PERHAPS BECAUSE of his southern Gothic heritage, Styron has long had a hunger to engage the large issues of good and evil, guilt, betrayal, revenge, and redemption. This is the message of his often eloquent prose: it aches for a subject portentous enough to justify its preacherly hellfire-and-brimstone tonalities. Styron needs, in fact, something of what the Puritan fathers, for all their fierce disdain for the secular life, possessed and we have lost: a coherent metaphysical view of the moral nature of existence. But all he has are urgent moral sentiments and quantities of raw material that he is unable to make significant within an ideological context. The result is, as both this novel and *Set This House on Fire* make clear, that Styron is driven, in his effort to create the effect of significance, to resorting to all manner of sham theatrics and specious intimations that large meanings exist just beneath the surface of his materials, that dark and inscrutable fates, dooms, and curses are hard at work shaping the grim destinies of his characters, even as the characters themselves repeatedly prove incapable of sustaining the great epic weight he tries to impose on them.

Instead of high tragedy, Styron is left in this novel with a kind of sad comedy. Instead of horrendous sin, he has in Sophie a pathetic case of self-preserving and quite justified expediency. Instead of sacred vengeance, he has in Nathan a case of deep psychotic disturbance. And in Stingo he clearly has a case of infinitely protracted adolescence. Like the characters of *Set This House on Fire*, they are all too weakly human and spiritually impoverished to become principals in the

great Sophoclean melodrama that Styron tries so strenuously to hoke up for them.

Because he is deficient in a sense of what his materials are supposed to mean, Styron has a tendency to lap into bathos and banality or weak declarations of what Saul Bellow once called "potato love" whenever he is required to express an attitude or make a generalization about the events that have occurred in his narrative. An excellent illustration is the closing scene of *Sophie's Choice*, where we find Stingo, after having attended the funeral of Sophie and Nathan, lying on a beach in the middle of the night, grieving over his dead friends, and pondering the wisdom of the statement "*Let your love flow out on all living things.*"

It was then that the tears finally spilled forth... tears... I had tried manfully to resist and could resist no longer, having kept them so bottled up that now, almost alarmingly, they drained out in warm rivulets between my fingers. ... I did not weep for the six million Jews or the two million Poles or the one million Serbs or the five million Russians—I was unprepared to weep for all humanity—but I did weep for these others who in one way or another had become dear to me, and my sobs made an unashamed racket across the abandoned beach; then I had no more tears to shed, and I lowered myself to the sand on legs that suddenly seemed strangely frail and rickety for a man of twenty-two. ...

When I awoke it was early morning. I lay looking straight up at the green sky with its translucent shawl of mist; like a tiny orb of crystal, solitary and serene, Venus shone through the haze above the quiet ocean. I heard children chattering nearby. ... Blessing my resurrection, I realized that the children had covered me with sand, protectively, and that I lay as safe as a mummy beneath this fine enveloping overcoat. It was then that in my mind I inscribed the words: "Neath cold sand I dreamed of death/ but woke at dawn to see/ in glory, the bright, the morning star."

Surely, there is a novel of great tragic dimension to be written about the Holocaust. But just as surely, Styron has not written it.

INEFFABLE PLEASURES

the variety of short stories

by Jeffrey Burke

The Best American Short Stories 1979: Selected from U.S. and Canadian Magazines, edited by Joyce Carol Oates with Shannon Ravenel. 160 pages. Houghton Mifflin, \$11.95.
Back Tickets, by Jayne Anne Phillips. 256 pages. Delacorte, \$8.95; paperback, \$4.95.

Between the Sheets and Other Stories, by Ian McEwan. 153 pages. Simon and Schuster, \$8.95.

The Apathetic Bookie Joint, by Daniel Fuchs. 288 pages. Methuen, \$10.00.

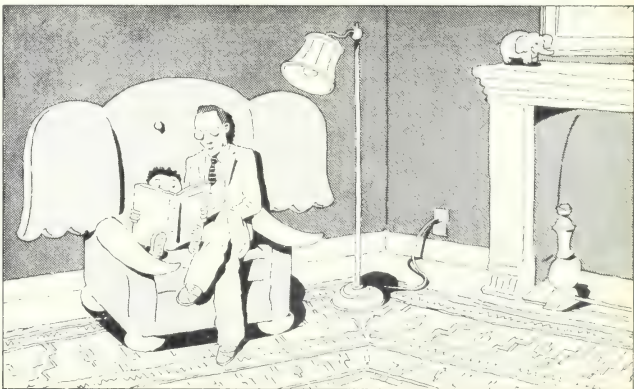
Testimony and Demeanor, by John Leary. 207 pages. Alfred A. Knopf, \$9.95.

PLACING the expansive host when I visited him shortly after his first birthday, my nephew Daniel squeezed into an armchair with me, spread open a colorful picture book across our laps, and, with his finger pointing and his voice modulating between actual words and expressive sounds, told me a short story. He soon left to repeat his narrative to the stuffed pink elephant on the couch, thereby depriving me of a unique opportunity to debate matters of plot, point of view, character development, and, most pointedly, audience. Left but enchanted, I set aside avuncular bias and derived from the pleasure of the experience what a good short story embodies: eloquence, insight, originality, and—the effect of these three combined—the mind engaged.

Such broad criteria would never satisfy the literary theoretician, who relies it upon himself to analyze and define, conferring aesthetic legitimacy and safeguarding the populace from

mere enjoyment. He would be either amused or aghast at the statement made by Joyce Carol Oates in her introduction to *The Best American Short Stories 1979* that “the short story . . . simply cannot be defined.” Oates, in fact, exceeds my own liberality: “I have no prejudices except that a story, as a construct of words, make some claim for uniqueness.” Most advertising and political campaigns would also fulfill that requirement. But in the context, after she has explained that her selection of 25 stories as the best published in 1978 represents a culling from the 125 sent her by Shannon Ravenel (formerly a fiction editor at Houghton Mifflin), who had read 1,494 published in 153 periodicals; I say, in the context, beyond her qualified sanction of experimental writing, her extolling of “the writer’s freedom,” her pronouncement that “Art is,” and her approval of stories that “employ a synecdochic method that allows the particular to evoke the universal”; after all that, her unstated standard is clear: These are the stories she liked most. They are, by her lights, good in twenty-five different ways, better than hundreds of others—and *Best* because the publisher would have it so. (Who would buy an anthology entitled *Twenty-five Very Nice American Short Stories*?)

Fortunately Joyce Carol Oates knows a good story when she reads one—which is to say that she and I like many of the same things—and her “kaleidoscopic affair,” as she calls *The Best*, affords generally splendid viewing. A few examples: Saul Bellow, William Styron, and Isaac Bashevis Singer are up to expectations. Flannery O’Connor’s “An Exile in the East,” written in 1954 and published for the first time in 1978, and Bernard Malamud’s “Home Is the Hero,” an excerpt from his most recent novel, *Dubin’s Lives*, as good as both stories are, raise questions of eligibility that Oates does not confront. “The New Music,” by Donald Barthelme, is an excellent example of his purposefully rambling dialogues; at least, I think there’s a purpose—call them affably elusive. “Living Alone,” by Robley Wilson, Jr., touchingly belies its title



Steve Guarnaccia

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by an understated series of incidents in the life of a divorced man and his cat. Kaatje Hurlbut reveals, with equal amounts of charm and terror, a young girl's growing discomfort at being alone among adults in "A Short Walk in the Afternoon." Lyn Coffin's "Falling off the Scaffold," an exchange of submissions and advice between an aspiring writer and the effusive director of a correspondence course, is an unsettling ironic medley. Finally—because reason demands a limit—"Something That Happened," by Jayne Anne Phillips, accomplishes in five and a half pages what Joseph Heller, in his similarly titled novel, went to such painful lengths for: evoking the dislocation of contemporary families and society through a handful of incisive domestic moments.

Like "Something That Happened," three of the stories in *Black Tickets*, Phillips's trade-publishing debut, are perceptive renderings of subdued middle-class problems in suburban settings—conflicts between generations—whose younger side includes the author, born in 1952. Several others represent good period or regional pieces (time: 1934; place: Anytown, Down South). Most of the balance are scraped from the urban underbelly: pimps, hookers, junkies, murderers, loners, losers, many of them young, in brittle episodes of despair and violence and sex. The writing, street-wise and staccato, hustles along from one startling image to the next. The shock effect wears thin quickly, and these stories reduce to masochistic exercises in negative capability—raising an effective barrier of mannered ugliness to screen or challenge her audience.

TO EXPECT CONSISTENCY in a collection of one author's work is not unreasonable, but *Black Tickets* strikes me as an intentional display of range and virtuosity, from which one takes the good with the unlikable and, filing away the author's name for future reference, guards against faint praise. Ian McEwan's *In Between the Sheets and Other Stories* makes such praise impossible. Because most of these stories are odd in a sophisticated way, often just one step shy of surrealism, they will either appeal to or repel the reader: there's no room for ambiva-

lence. In "Reflections of a Kept Ape" the narrator's human lover is a blocked woman novelist. Another offbeat coupling is that of a wealthy man and a department store mannequin in "Dead as They Come." The title story plays adolescent sexuality and an undercurrent of incest against a divorced father's poignant desire for a visit with his daughter:

But she was asleep and almost smiling, and in the pallor of her upturned throat he thought he saw from one bright morning in his childhood a field of dazzling white snow which he, a small boy of eight, had not dared scar with footprints.

"Psychopolis" describes Los Angeles in the Seventies as Nathanael West might have had he made a grotesque of tedium. McEwan is a remarkable writer—the impressionistic fragments of "To and Fro" recall Virginia Woolf—and despite his inclination toward "Twilight Zone" twists of plot, he never sacrifices insight to surprise.

The Apathetic Bookie Joint is a retrospective collection of Daniel Fuchs's short fiction and a boon to both initiate and rediscoverer. No room for ambivalence here either: Of the fifteen short stories set in Brooklyn, fifteen are modest masterpieces about barbers, cops, floorwalkers, young lovers on rooftops, and other very human beings in a small yet timeless world. Almost all of these stories were written and published in *The New Yorker* between 1939 and 1942, after which Fuchs went west to write screenplays. The collection follows his migration through several stories set in Hollywood, culminating in a previously unpublished novella entitled "Triplicate." A casual stroll through a cheerless cocktail party, "Triplicate" satirizes film-industry types with apparent *roman-à-clef* viciousness. At one point, Rosengarten, the main character and Fuchs's fictional counterpart, thinks about the writing he did earlier in his career:

The stories Rosengarten had done for — were brief pieces, a few thousand words. They were carefully worked over, really vaudeville turns, depending on mimicry, and they had little relation to the writing he did for the movies.

"In a sense you're writing to order for them too," Rosengarten said. "They have their own con-

ventions and you meet them whether you know it or not."

Now that's faint praise, as well as a circumstantial evidence that writers at their own worst critics.

The stories in *Testimony and Lament* might lure an unsuspicious reader into thinking John Casey a facile writer who possesses, like one of his characters, "a steady flow of alert, slightly inarticulate enthusiasm for other people's events." His writing is straightforward—almost expository—vehicle for the stories' first-person narrators (all bright young post-college men), who are relating events in lives less simple than they at first believe them to be. Casey never takes his eye off what, in the words of another character, "art should be concerned with—i.e., the changes that are ordinarily hidden from us." His prose and voice have the effect of relaxing a reader, lulling him into an agreeable companionship with the narrator who eventually becomes the shared experience of life's mutability. The intelligent soldier in "A More Perfect Cross-section," who expects to absent himself from the crudities of basic training by regarding his comrades with cool irony, has gone through a psychological and physical beating by the story's end and feels "entirely present, as though they had thrown a blanket of my own skin over me and pulled it tight against the way to the ground." Even with this the simplest of the four stories, I do find Casey an injustice by confining him to plot summary. In a good work of short fiction there is little that is inessential. This is true also of the ninety-six-page-long "Connaissance d'Arts," which describes an English professor's affair with one of his students; in this familiar situation a paragraph is unimportant to Casey's brilliant development of the professor's shifting attitude. Present in all the stories (and a relief from these lopsided times) is a kind of high comedy rich with psychological insight—not to mention eloquence and originality.

Which brings me back to my nephew, who, after treating the stuffed pig elephant to several fine readings and finding it plainly unmoved by literature, rejoined me in the armchair where he narrated a story that sounded a lot like the first one.

ZAHEDI'S AFFAIRS

the shah's receiving line in Washington

by Nicholas Burnett

THOSE WHO DOUBT that Washington has taken on many of the trappings of a court need only glance at *The Washington Dossier*, a glossy monthly magazine that circulates among socialites to keep them informed of their ownings. *Dossier* announced its intentions in its inaugural issue in 1975: *Let the other media overindulge itself [sic] on misery, gorge on disaster. We prefer to tell about Chateaubriand served in a gold dish and La Tache bottled in a great year. Our world is the Washington scene that operates quite independently from the bureaucratic malaise. Our heroes and heroines are not the power figures of the moment, tomorrow's political ghosts, but the Princes and Princesses of a far more enduring milieu, half fantasy, half reality,*

but never boring. Above all, never boring....

Since it began publication, *Dossier* has devoted as much space to caviar and Dom Pérignon as to Chateaubriand and La Tache, because the magazine's least boring Prince was, until the success of the Ayatollah Khomeini's Iranian revolution, the shah's ambassador to the United States, Ardeshir Zahedi. Almost every issue of *Dossier* carried at least one photograph of or reference to Zahedi. Sometimes he received special attention; in November, 1976, he was gushingly profiled as one of Washington's Ten Perfect Gentlemen and in June, 1978, he adorned the magazine's cover, champagne glass in his hand and Beverly Sills at his side, under the caption "Toast of the Town." Zahedi entertained more and better than anyone else in the capital—even Tongsun Park—during the mid-1970s. His parties were the most lavish, the most glamorous, and the most reported, never more so than when the shah and his wife, the shahbanou (or "Shah Bunny," as *Dossier* once described her in its inimitably gossipy style), were in Washington to meet with the President, the Secretary of State, and other members of the ruling class.

Americans have a weakness for glamour and for royalty. One irony of this democracy is that the presence of a Hollywood star or a reigning monarch often leads to the waning of critical faculties. The press, and not just the gossip columns, is no more immune to this affliction than other admirers of the throne. The attention focused on the queen of England has always been wildly out of proportion to her importance. The same applies, perhaps

even more so, to the coverage of Princess Grace of Monaco and, more recently, to the new wife taken by King Hussein of Jordan: both are American royalty, after all, or as near to it as Americans can become.

THE SHAH OF IRAN did not marry an American, but he was an American creation. Helped onto the throne in 1941 by the British, he was restored to power in 1953, courtesy of the Central Intelligence Agency. From the late 1960s until his fall, the American press fawned upon his own image and that of his country. By the mid-1970s, even the shah believed the press notices that Iran was once again on the verge of becoming one of the world's great civilizations, a notion also taken perfectly



Barry M. Goldwater, Jr. (R-Calif.) and Ardeshir Zahedi at an Iranian embassy party.



Zahedi and Birgitta Westling, his date for the evening.

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seriously in the United States. The key to this public-relations coup was the delusion of Iran promoted by Zahedi in Washington, and the fascination of the media with the shah as a wealthy member of the world's royal class, a glamorous and intelligent ruler who would lead his people in the rise of a second Persian Empire. Article after article—as if written by Zahedi—made a point of listing the shah's full, self-awarded title: Muhammad Riza Pahlevi Aryamehr, Shahanshah of Iran, Light of Iran, King of Kings, Shadow of the Almighty, Center of the Universe, and Occupant of the Peacock Throne.

The Center of the Universe's entrance onto the more modest world stage came in 1971. OPEC had not raised the price of oil and Iran was not a rich country. Yet the shah arranged an opulent week-long celebration to commemorate the 2,500th anniversary of Cyrus the Great's founding of the Persian Empire. No matter that the ceremony was held ten years off the correct date; the shah had himself been crowned in 1967, a mere twenty-six years after ascending the Peacock Throne. Precise timing is an annoyance when dazzling the world press is the goal. No matter, moreover, that the shah was unrelated to Cyrus; the Pahlevi dynasty was only two generations old, dating from 1921, when the British had installed the shah's father—a military officer—as emperor. The celebration of Cyrus's anniversary conferred legitimacy on the shah's royalty and placed him in a direct line of succession from Cyrus. More than a thousand foreign journalists were invited to observe the ceremonies, held in a tent city erected at Persepolis, and attended by kings, presidents, sheikhs, princes, and flatterers from around the world. The American press covered the story at first in a responsible manner, noting the contrast between the splendor of the multimillion-dollar occasion and the poverty of most Iranian citizens. Sally Quinn of the *Washington Post*, like a number of other writers, was obviously amused by the spectacle, yet she still devoted six pages to a story listing every detail of the sumptuous accommodations and comestibles—from Maxim's in Paris, of course—provided for the visitors. By the end of the week, Iran was firmly on the map, if only the symbolic one of the *Social Register*, and its ruler was established

as a recognized member of the world's royal class.

Pomp and circumstance introduced Iran to the world press in the early 1970s, and they continued to serve the Peacock Throne well in later years. Magazine after magazine ran articles, usually accompanied by obeisant color photographs, about the shah, the shahbanou, and their children. The first issue of the reincarnated *Life*, appearing in October, 1978, long after it had become apparent that the shah was a pretender to power, devoted five pages of photographs to the royal family at play in their summer home, noting almost in passing only that "there has sometimes been violent opposition to his efforts to modernize Iran." Society magazines were particularly good for puffs on the Iranian royal family. *Town and Country*, for example, put out a special Iranian issue one month in 1975, featuring the Empress Farah and various other glamorous Persian women. Ambassador Zahedi in Washington, of course, laid on a special party to celebrate the issue.

Columnists like Joseph Kraft were attracted to the glamour and majesty of the shah. Time after time on what became almost annual homages to Teheran, Kraft relished telling his readers of the access he enjoyed to this most powerful of men: "I saw the shah at his splendid palace here"; "in an interview here in Teheran the other day"; "in a brief chat" with the shah; "talks with the shah"; and so on. Kraft had an overwhelming admiration for the Occupant of the Peacock Throne; in 1974 "the shah's extraordinary blend of broad views and detailed knowledge" had so impressed him that he had concluded that "by current standards anyhow, the shah is one of the most sagacious and experienced rulers in the world." Sitting down with the shah satisfied the journalist's ego, his own desire to mix with the mighty and the majestic. Kraft's relationship with the shah went so far that, by his own account in *The New Yorker* last December, he had tried to cheer up the downcast ruler on a visit during the fall with the prospect of using the military to retain power. "If worse came to worst, I went on, there was always the Army. The military was strong, and its leaders were loyal. The shah said that force had its limitations." Who was the more realistic that day?

IF PROVIDING ACCESS to the shah to prestigious journalists was an ingenious way to influence foreign opinion, another was the royal family's use of the conference. The shahbanou, for example, was able to take advantage of her close ties with the Aspen Institute. (A frequent visitor to Aspen, she was once reported *Dossier* as dancing until 4 A.M. with such "cerebralists" as Robert McInerney, Katharine Graham, and Josep Calafano, after which she "took everybody home and made eggs for them.") She had the Pahlevi Foundation, the Iranian royal family's financial vehicle for self-promotion and world charitable contributions, make a grant to enable the institute to hold in 1975 Persepolis (where else?) a conference on Iran's future. The usual crowd attended, including a number of influential journalists like Paul Balta (*Le Monde*), James Hoge (*Chicago Sun Times*), Ronald Kriss (*Time*), Arrigo Levi (*La Stampa*), John Oakes (*New York Times*), and Theo Sommer (*Der Zeit*). They were treated to thoughtful papers on Iran's development and some of the problems encountered. Much of the conference was devoted to praising the shah's achievements, however. The tone can be inferred from this statement by Daniel Yankelovich delivered at the end of the meeting:

I anticipated that I might see something of significance for Iran. I now feel that what Iran is seeking to accomplish holds great significance not only for Iran, but also for my own country and for all the countries of the world.

The visiting journalists were not particularly affected by the glittering ports; indeed, John Oakes used the occasion for some skeptical articles about the shah. Yet, when the shah called long-distance via Aspen, the pack was running.

Oakes's articles from Iran were sufficiently critical that he probably did receive a kilo of caviar from Ambassador Zahedi when he returned to the United States. In this he would have been unusual. Zahedi, who became the shah's emissary to Washington in 1971, quickly made it his practice to reward the authors of publicity for his country or his embassy with tins of caviar and magnums of champagne. Henry Mitell, a writer for the "Style" section of the *Washington Post*, did an article

November, 1978, about Zahedi's responsibilities as the shah's regime crumbled, and was rewarded with two presents, which he returned. A few years before, Maury Povich had had Zahedi on his Washington television talk show, later balancing his appearance by an interview with two dissident Iranian students. Once Zahedi had been on the show, however, Povich began to receive invitations to embassy events, not to mention tins of caviar and bottles of Dom Pérignon every Christmas. He was even invited to an embassy dinner at which he was the guest of honor, an occasion attended by such people as Ben Bradlee, editor of the *Washington Post*, Art Buchwald, J. Edgar Hoover, and reporters from the *Los Angeles Times* and *Women's Wear Daily*.

Little has been made of Zahedi's gifts and parties for reporters. Perhaps it is too much to expect the press to report its own misdeeds. Members of the new guard at the Iranian embassy have alluded to a slush fund run by Zahedi, estimated at \$25,000 per month. There have been rumors, hard to pin down, of Persian carpets, diamond earrings, and cash being received from him. There are known to be three lists of gift recipients, one each for members of the press, of Congress, and of Washington society, that have been sent to Teheran without the names on them being revealed. Ata Shafii, the new press attaché at the embassy, told me that no word has yet been received as to whether they will be made public. He also observed that "Zahedi took the most sensitive documents with him to Switzerland or wherever he is, so we can't get at them." (These papers gave Zahedi a considerable future as an informed source, in the event of a scandal.) Claudia Wright of the British weekly *The New Statesman*, however, did get three officials to identify eight prominent Washington journalists on the press list: columnists Joseph Kraft, Howland Evans and Robert Novak, Joseph Alsop, and Carl Rowan, and society reporters Nancy Collins, Joy Millington, and Betty Beale. Most had no comment, although Kraft denied receiving gifts and Evans admitted receiving caviar each Christmas but observed that so did "probably three hundred" reporters in Washington. Evans's figure of 300 is quite possibly correct. So free as the distribution of caviar in Wash-



WWD Guy DeLoit

Zahedi and Elizabeth Taylor Warner.

ington that Art Buchwald devoted a column to it.

Whatever else you want to say about Ambassador Zahedi, he certainly was lavish with his country's edibles. Almost everyone I knew of importance in the capital was up to his hips in sturgeon eggs. Zahedi had penetrated the soft underbelly of Washington, and as long as the stuff kept coming, no one was really interested in how the shah was doing.

It is, to say the least, a great irony that a liver complaint prevents the shah from ever consuming caviar himself.

BETTY BEALE admitted to Claudia Wright that she had received caviar and champagne "a couple of times a year." The gifts certainly seem to have worked. This January her society column in the *Washington Star* welcomed newly elected Congressmen to the Washington social scene and went on to advise them:

Unfortunately, the biggest hunk of the glamour, excitement and brilliance of Washington entertaining disappeared with the absence of Iranian Ambassador Ardeshir Zahedi.

There has not been in this city in perhaps a half century another host who entertained so frequently so many important people with such elegance and such concern for the comfort of his guests. His detractors are only those who have not witnessed firsthand his brand of diplomacy, are unacquainted with the good he has done in the

community and with the respect he has earned from American officials and diplomatic colleagues.

Zahedi's entertaining was certainly brilliant. He established himself as Washington's premier host almost as soon as he arrived; with uninspired regularity reporters labeled him a "later-day Perle Mesta." By the middle of 1974 *Parade* could run a piece about him entitled "Washington's Host with the Most." The society pages always called him Ardeshir, sometimes Adorable Ardeshir, never Zahedi. All Washington, that is all who thought they counted, scrambled for invitations to his embassy. Zahedi's parties ranged from an annual bash for 2,000 guests in honor of the shah's birthday—an October event that tied up traffic for hours on Massachusetts Avenue outside the embassy—to intimate dinners for an anointed few. An invitation to one of Zahedi's little dinners meant, socially at least, that you had arrived. He entertained at least twice a week. In 1977, according to *Dossier*, "some 7,000 guests savored his hospitality and the glittering ambience of the Iranian Embassy."

There was almost always caviar. Zahedi provided the best caviar in the world, not the usual black variety, but the much rarer "golden caviar," known as Pearls of the Caspian. There was Persian vodka. There was champagne. There was expensive food, often doled out by Zahedi himself. He liked to don a chef's uniform and mix steak tartare or prepare cherries jubilee. There was music. There were belly dancers. There was conventional dancing, which Zahedi loved. He rarely sat down, and was often seen leading the rich and powerful around the room in elaborate conga lines, making a point of dancing with every lady he could. And then there were the games. Kissing games like Moosha-Poosha, described by one partygoer as a "rather grabby Iranian version of Post Office." Drinking games like Cardinal Puff. (There were, according to the Washington rumor mill, other games at other parties, private parties Zahedi gave for members of Congress, parties replete with hashish, opium, and prepaid call girls. The FBI and the House Committee on Official Standards are investigating these allegations.) Sometimes, especially when there were Iranian officials visiting from Teheran, there

ere movies; in 1976 the X-rated *Emmanuelle II* was a particular favorite.

If Emmanuelle visited the embassy only on celluloid (though who knows?), her stars showed up in person. Elizabeth Taylor, Pearl Bailey, Liza Minnelli, Andy Warhol, Barbra Streisand, Gregory Peck, Halston, Polly Bergen—they all came. So, of course, did members of the Administration, Senators, Congressmen, Supreme Court justices, and Washington socialites. And so did the press, particularly influential syndicated columnists and the publishers of Washington's two daily newspapers. "Happiness," noted Sen. Frank Church to the *Star's* society reporter, Ymelda Dixon, apropos Zahedi's guest list at a 1977 party, "is having both Katharine Graham and Joe Allbritton at a dinner." On another occasion that year, Zahedi paid for a table at a dinner held to raise funds with which to endow a chair at the University of Alabama in honor of John Sparkman, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. "Naturally," *Dossier* reported, "Ambassador Ardeshtir Zahedi was there, his table placed cheek-to-jowl with that of Senator Sparkman's party. Ardeshtir's date for the evening was lovely-looking Mary Hoyt [who is Mrs. Carter's press secretary by day]. His other guests included the Carl Rowans and the Martin Agronskys."

Agronsky and Rowan appear to have been frequent guests at the embassy's social occasions. So were many other columnists. Nor was the world of television forgotten. Barbara Walters attended a number of parties in the mid-1970s when she was host of NBC's "Today" show, a post that required her to rise at 4 A.M. each day. In 1975, Zahedi was so keen to have her one evening that he supplied a private jet to ferry her back to New York, a char-
ter that set his embassy back around \$100,000. ("Today" had, incidentally, provided live coverage of the 2,500th anniversary celebrations a few years before.) That evening, President and Mrs. Ford had been guests at the embassy but they had left early. "At midnight," the *Post* reported, "a handful of diarchs, including Presidential Counselor Robert Hartmann, NBC personality Barbara Walters, and U.S. Chief of Protocol Henry Catto danced." No need for the TV "personality"—no

longer a journalist, let it be noted—to catch the last bus home when she had a plane standing by, courtesy of the government of Iran.

The most lavish entertainments occurred when the shah and his wife came to Washington. "Le tout establishment Washington," wrote Sally Quinn of the *Post*, had been awaiting the shah's May, 1975, visit for weeks. His four days of talks with Gerald Ford were accompanied by three evenings of entertainment. On Thursday the White House gave a state dinner for the shah, on Friday there was a dinner at Zahedi's embassy for sixty-six select guests, and on Saturday the Iranians invited 700 to view the ballet at the Kennedy Center, 234 of them going on to the embassy for supper. The social occasions gave rise to four lists, widely referred to by those who cared as A (White House dinner), B (Friday dinner), C (Saturday ballet plus supper), and D (ballet only). *Everyone* wanted to be on at least one list, preferably not D. Quinn reported one "prominent columnist," regrettably unidentified, who, on hearing that he was invited to the Saturday supper, grumbled, "we're definitely on the C list." Only one person made it onto both the B and C lists: Barbara Walters.

The professional commentators, the columnists, were strangely ambivalent as the shah's power collapsed. Joseph Kraft finally called for his departure. Carl Rowan was one of the earliest to realize the depths of the trouble in which the shah found himself, particularly in a television special broadcast last October. Yet as late as January 26 of this year he was still lauding the shah's achievements relative to those of his successors:

For all his arrogance and ruthlessness, the shah used his power in many constructive ways—education of the masses, the emancipation of women, making Iran an economic and military power. Khomeini's contribution so far has been largely destructive....

Aside from wondering what is constructive about Iran's becoming a military power, the reader of Rowan's columns over the years would be hard put to remember many earlier references to either arrogance or ruthlessness. Rowan, as noted, was a relatively frequent visitor to Zahedi's parties.

The press has become an integrated

component of the Washington social circuit. "The diplomatic corps is on a slice of the Washington pie," Betty Beale advised new members of Congress in January. "The other slices are The Administration, The Congress, The Press, Residential Society, The Military, and The Judiciary. The best parties are a mixture, at least, of the first five." Beale is herself a member. Nos. 4 and 5. She appears in the *Green Book*, an annual listing of the accepted members of society, used as a bible by Washington hostesses. So do Joseph Alsop, Charles Bartlett, Tom Braden, Marquis Childs, Rowland Evans, Smith Hempstone, Joseph Kraft and William Safire, columnists all. Also Philip Geyelin, until very recently editorial page editor at the *Post*, and Edwin Yoder, his counterpart at the *Star*. (Carl Rowan and Martin Agronsky are not on the list.) Not only do these people accept hospitality; they offer it themselves. A 1973 article in *The Washingtonian*, "How to Stay High in Society," observed that "it does, of course, help if one has media power. No one turns down an invitation to the Joe Alsops' or the Jack Kauffmans' or Kay Graham's or the Joe Krafts'."

Washington journalists love to move in glittering circles. The United States emissary of the Peacock Throne is no longer there to welcome them, nor is his liege in Teheran. Iranians in both cities have been pouring vast quantities of wine down wells as strict Islamic law takes over. The Persian caviar and French champagne that Zahedi used to shower on the city are no longer available. Yet there are plenty of contenders to take his place. After regretting Zahedi's departure in her January column of social instruction for new Congressmen, Betty Beale continued:

Still champagne diplomacy goes on and those noted for dispensing it well include OAS Secretary-General and Mrs. Orjila, Swedish Ambassador and Countess Wachtmeister, Moroccan Ambassador and Mrs. Bengelloun, German Ambassador and Mrs. von Staden, Japanese Ambassador and Mrs. Togo, the Saudi Arabians, the French, the Turks, the Dutch, the Jordanians, the Chileans, the Argentines and so on.

And so on.

GOING NOWHERE FAST

he rat race, more or less

by Lawrence Shainberg

OF ALL THE RUNNERS in this year's New York City Marathon, the most unusual, by any estimate, will be among a group that calls itself "The Robert Wilson Brigade." Named after the teemed dramatist (*Einstein on the Beach*, *The Life and Times of Sigismund Freud*, et cetera), who is known among other things for his interest in slow motion¹ and his use of tedium as dramatic device, the Wilson Brigade is a group of runners who value slowness rather than speed. Like others in the race, they will measure their accomplishment by the time they take to finish, but these iconoclasts, recognizable by their electric-blue T-shirts with a turtle on the chest, will be the only participants for whom more is less and less more. A Wilsoner who runs the 26.2-mile distance in less than seven hours will be automatically suspended from the group. Several among their ranks point with pride to ten-hour marathons, and one claims to have used twelve hours, twenty-five minutes, forty-three seconds to complete the Boston Marathon last April.

The brigade was formed by T. Krishna Murphy, a thirty-four-year-old Irish-Indian (Irish father, Indian mother) from Madras. An accomplished distance runner in college, Murphy, or T.M., as he is known to his disciples, turned his attention to

the marathon after graduation and, before his conversion to Slow Distance, had lowered his time to a very respectable 2:23:21 (at Muscle Shoals, in 1972). The revelations that led to Wilsoning came to him in January, 1974, when an interview with Frank Shorter appeared in *Runner's World*. The statement that impressed Murphy was in reply to a question concerning marathon speed. "It may well be," Shorter said, "that a slow marathon takes more out of you than a fast one. Don't forget: the slower your time, the longer you have to endure." T.M. says this statement changed his life, leading him to his now famous theory that speed is a narcotic, a drug we use to escape anxiety. "If slow marathons are harder than fast ones, why do we reward those who run fast? I say it is because speed is an expression of our cultural disease, the embodiment of a technological ethos that makes us rush through our lives as if we can't wait to get them over. Shorter made me understand that the real challenge is to run slow, not fast."

Murphy turned his training pattern inside out. His morning ten-mile run, which three months before had required sixty-three minutes, became a fifteen-miler that took four hours. To eliminate what he calls the "problem" of his long stride, he designed a special belt that he tied to his legs and

shortened gradually until, after nine months, he had brought his stride down from the forty-seven inches his coaches had admired to its present fifteen inches, which he calls "the no-stride" (this belt, incidentally, was marketed last winter by Tao Industries of Northern California under the trademark "Krishnabelt").

His new training was far more difficult, he says, than anything he'd done before. There was less physical pain (any workout that contains physical pain he calls "pathological") but in its place was an insufferable boredom that delighted him. "There are those who fear boredom and devote their energies to avoiding it," he wrote, "but not us, not Wilsoners. We welcome it! Tolerance for boredom is tolerance for anxiety, and that's what we seek to develop. Not leg strength or some brute, macho fantasy of courage, but patience, tranquility, an ability to be present in any given time and space, a freedom from the need for entertainment and distraction. That's why Wilsoners don't go to movies or watch TV. For us such behavior is merely speed in other forms."

Although just forty-seven runners

Lawrence Shainberg is a novelist and the author of *Brain Surgeon: An Intimate View of His World*, published in June by Lipincott.



will compete under the Wilson banner in the New York marathon, the brigade claims a membership of 234 from nineteen countries, including the People's Republic of China and Tibet. Murphy is confident that Wilsoners will become a substantial presence in the world of international athletics. In his view, the brigade is a revolutionary movement, a reaction against widespread disease. "People go out to track meets and cheer the sprinters. Can you imagine? That's like cheering junkies when they shoot up. Speed is the death instinct concretized! The 100-meter dash is psychodrama, an experiment in group psychosis. And the idea of running a marathon against the stopwatch is comparable to measuring sexual capacity by the speed with which you can reach orgasm. What we're after, if you like, is making love as long as possible."

Scientific support has come from Charles "Baba" Limbic, the radical Romanian neurophysiologist whose work with rats confirms most of the hypotheses that led to Wilsoning. Limbic, famous for his work on the "neurology of desire" and "impatience" and especially his identification of the particular cell-bundles in rats' brains that are responsible for "ambition," had discovered Slow Distance independently when he found that rats on slow exercise wheels were "neurologically superior" to those on fast wheels. By "neurological superiority" he meant of course that their "ambition-centers" were smaller and that they were therefore less "anxious" and more "content." Others have questioned this definition, but Limbic claims proof of it through autopsy. Indeed, last winter he published photographs taken by electron microscope that purport to compare the "ambition-centers" of rats from different wheels and to demonstrate conclusively the superiority of "Wilsonian" over "conventional" rats.

THE ULTIMATE MEASURE of Wilsoning's success may lie in the fact that, like all important movements, it has spawned its own dissidents. Three groups that have attracted particular attention are the "Giacomettis," who not only take their name from the great Swiss sculptor but attempt in races to

emulate his work; the "Neurologists," who consider themselves Limbic's disciples; and the "Neurowilsoners," who claim they have joined Murphy's original vision to that of the Neurologists.

Giacomettis believe they have found the ultimate realization of Slow Distance. Says their founder, the Tibetan monk Chogyam Pumaddidas, "If the problem is motion, why indulge it?" For Pumaddidas and his disciples, the true anxiety for a runner lies in "not-running," and the ultimate drug, therefore, is running, slow or fast. Thus, Giacomettis, like other runners, congregate around the starting line at races, but take only one step beyond it, whereupon they freeze in poses similar to Giacometti sculpture. These poses, which Pumaddidas calls "asanas," will be held for lengths of time approximating Wilsonian levels, anywhere from five to twelve hours, during which Giacomettis, in order to maximize their anxiety, attempt to imagine every step of the race they are "not-running." Some are said to be so successful in this enterprise that they suffer injuries comparable to those of conventional runners. Pumaddidas himself came out of last year's Boston Marathon, which he did not run for nine hours, with a case of "runner's knee" and a severe hypoglycemic condition. Injured or not, Giacomettis—or Giacs, as they call themselves—who hold their poses for five hours or more are said to "realize" the race, and they have their own medals with which noncompetitors are honored.

If Giacs have extended Murphy's laws, the Neurologists, according to their spokesman, a Japanese neurochemist who studied with Baba Limbic and has for the past few years called himself "Medullah," have revealed their ultimate absurdity. For Medullah, the problem of speed is the problem of the brain, specifically the universal condition that he calls "Here-There-Aphasia." HTA, as it is known in the vernacular, is the devastating delusion that "here," a function of the right hemisphere, and "there," a function of the left, are different places. In effect, speed is an inevitable symptom of an asymmetrical brain, for once the hemispheres are divided against each other, animals so afflicted will rush desperately from one place to another in search of unification.

Says Medullah (whose English, according to his disciples, is not so much "broken" as "neurologically symmetrical"): "Brain problem, not speed. Not running not enough. Not speed not happen not so quick." After years of work, Medullah devised a series of experiments in Limbic's laboratory that led him to confirmation of HTA theory and, eventually, to "Neurogizing." Through selective breeding he developed a species of rat that has a brain as asymmetrical as a human brain's, with correspondingly large "desire-bundles" and "ambition-centers." When released on exercise wheels such rats (called "Olympians" in papers published by Medullah) will run with maximum speed until exhausted. Retaining one group of Olympians for control studies, Medullah strapped another into specially designed harnesses that held them in suspension above the wheel so that while their bodies remained motionless, their feet were always "racing." The idea of course was to "fool" the rats into thinking they were in motion. "Brain thinking moving," Medullah explains, "but brain mistaking. Thinking 'here!' thinking 'there!' but look! Always here!" Kept in harness throughout their lives, these rats, upon autopsy, were found to have no "desire-bundles" whatsoever. What, more, their brains were so much "a piece" that no demarcation could be found between the hemispheres.

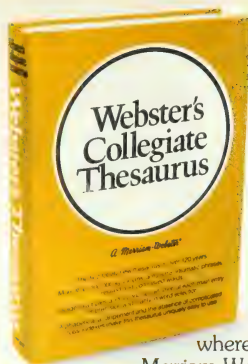
Since the harness was impractical for human beings under normal racing conditions (Medullah has built several, which, used in conjunction with conveyor belts, are featured at track-tractions at the Neurologists' training camp in the Catskills), Medullah devised a method of running that he believes will accomplish the same healing process in the human brain that the harness accomplished in the rats. Neurologists bring deck chairs to the starting line and sit in them throughout the race. They are trained to keep their eyes closed and to move no part of their bodies except their feet, which, like harnessed rats, they tap softly on the ground as if they're running. According to Medullah, this subtle action has an uncanny effect on the brain, setting the motor regions at war against the reflective centers, exciting in the "here-region" a continuous sense of abandonment, in the

ere-region" a sense of imminent ar-
al. Upon opening their eyes, Neu-
ogists—having fooled their brains
pletely—are said to experience
ain-wholeness" to such an extent
t they are transported with joy.
d those who sit out enough races,
ording to Medullah, will gradually
rge their hemispheres until, per-
ving the ultimate truth that all
nts in space are one, they will re-
quish the delusion of motion. "How
anywhere?" he says. "Anywhere
rywhere!"

Of all Wilsonian dissidents, the most
reme are those who call themselves
"Neurowilsoners" or "not-Wilson-
s." Organized by a young runner
med "Emile Zatopek" (he includes
e quotation marks in the spelling of
e name to distinguish himself from
e great Czech runner, to whom he
not related), Neurowilsoners reason
at, while Murphy's original insight
is correct, he did not understand it
himself. As a former Wilsoner who
came, in his time, a Giacometti
d a Neurologist, "Zatopek" speaks
om legitimate experience when he
ys, "All Wilsonism points in the
me direction. Murphy's wisdom and
edullah's experiments reveal that the
blem—the root problem!—is am-
nition. What neither understood was
at the ultimate ambition of a dam-
ed brain is to cure itself of brain
image. How can we make progress
we don't attack that problem at its
urce?"

Following "Zatopek," Neurowilson-
s attempt to rid themselves of all de-
re by doing what they desire the
fast. As they understand it, there is
e better way to undermine ambition
an running long distances as fast as
ossible. Since they regard this activ-
y as pathological, they consider it
efficient process by which the brain
is forced to accept its own hopeless
edicament. "What we aim to do,"
ys "Zatopek," who ran last year's
oston Marathon in two hours fourteen
minutes flat, "is relinquish once and
r all the belief that we can improve
selves. Anyone who's ever seen a
unner in peak condition will know
at, whatever claims he makes to the
ntrary, this is his true goal. Let
ers war with brain damage! We
abrace ours and deepen it in every
y we can!" □

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easy 269

- easy** *adj* 1 causing or involving little or no difficulty
<an easy solution>
syn effortless, facile, light, royal, simple, smooth, un-
troublesome
rel apparent, clear, distinct, evident, manifest, obvious,
plain, clear-cut, straightforward, uncomplicated, un-
compounded, uninvolved
idiom easy as falling off a log, easy as pie, nothing to
it
con arduous, difficult, troublesome, abstruse, complex,
complicated, intricate, knotty
ant hard
2 syn FORBEARING, charitable, clement, indulgent,
lenient, merciful, tolerant
rel compassionate, condoning, excusing, forgiving, par-
doning, sympathetic, benign, kindly, lax, moderate,
soft, humoring, mollycoddling, pampering, spoiling
con austere, exacting, rigid, severe, stern, strict, strin-
gent
3 easily taken advantage of or imposed upon <he was
easy prey to her wiles>
syn fleecable, gullible, naive, susceptible
rel credulous, trusting, untrustworthy, unsuspicious,
deceivable, deludable, dupable, exploitable, artless,
dewy-eyed, green, simple, unsophisticated
con critical, cynical, disbelieving, mistrustful, scoffing,
skeptical, suspicious, unbelieving
4 syn FAST 7, light, loose, ruggish, unchaste, wanton,
whorish
5 syn COMFORTABLE 2, comfy, cozy, cushy, easeful,
snug, soft
rel secure
con discontented, dissatisfied, miserable
ant comfortable, content, contented, good-

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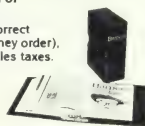
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All entries must be typewritten, and less than 400 words in length; none will be returned. Entries must be submitted by September 30, 1979, to Harper's/Travel, Suite 2304, 420 Lexington Avenue, New York, New York 10017.



Solution to the August Puzzle

Notes for "The Uncrossword Puzzle"

Across: 1. oddity, anagram; 6. scar(C); 10. c(Anne)ries; 11. exterminates, anagram; 12. (F)actual; 15. a(t)a(x); 18. (B)eagle; 19. levelers, two meanings; 20. b(R)ag; 22. rhos, hidden; 23. gall(I)vant; 25. env(O)y; 28. b(o)d(y); 29. f(I)ends; 32. intertwining, anagram; 33. briquet(t)e, anagram; 34. Turner, two meanings (and an error by the constructors—we told you this was a bit mind-boggling); 35. caters, anagram. **Down:** 1. an-l-us(reversal); 2. seminoles, anagram; 3. Rep-rise; 4. no(O)se, anagram; 5. Gus-H; 6. door keys, anagram; 7. Eton, hidden; 8. nuder, anagram; 9. b(e)l(ays); 13. cruel, homonym; 14. sauntered, anagram; 16. R-oars; 17. dismally, anagram; 21. mock-ery, anagram; 22. object, two meanings; 24. de(N-S)er; 26. Tu(d.)or, anagram; 27. anvil, hidden; 30. tops, two meanings; 31. rays, homonym.

PUZZLE

STEREO COMPONENTS

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

(with acknowledgements to *Brain Games*, by Will Shortz)

This month's instructions:

Nine "lights" (i.e., diagram entries) are unclued. These words, all common, must be constructed from two smaller words that can be interwoven without changing the order of their letters to make a single larger word—i.e., FURY and RITE could be combined to make FRUITERY. The eighteen "component words" are defined in no particular order; the solver must pair them off.

Clue answers include four proper names, a common foreign word, and an uncommon compound term (23A); one of the "component words" is a variant spelling. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 109.

CLUES

COMPONENT WORDS

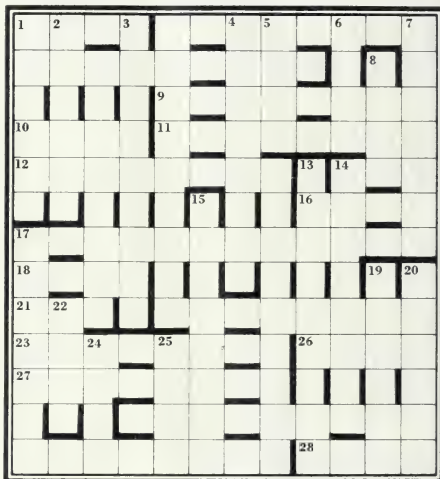
- It's Ford, for one half of a President (3)
- It has springs, but for speed it goes into ditch (3)
- Running after about one child... (4)
- ...drove Mary crazy (4)
- Poet, creator of "The Rambler" (4)
- Profit from disheartened wait? (4)
- Confusing way alphabet limits me externally (4)
- Happily leap right off and land going into the ocean (4)
- Notice back covers (4)
- Very fashionable, in doctor's opinion (4)
- It's smart to start 2 Down (4)
- Capital agent (5)
- Bird on her shifts (5)
- Pork roasts oil-cooked by Poles (5)
- Flaky rock sound with southern beginning (5)
- On reflection I'd two-time love as before (5)
- Returned money; returned change for the baby (6)
- German gets up and makes a fuss (7)

ACROSS

- Smart man goes after a kind of power (4)
- Company engineer; do work in tree (8)
- Race riot in large plot (4)
- Intellectual losing hair? (8)
- Hundred test returns in cover that's closed forcefully (8)
- Far out, brother (3)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Stereo Components, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by September 13. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscrip-



- Dilettantish... but a good deal of a martyr (4)
- Luna's funny bone (4)
- Nasty fish—wager this to be treacherous (3)
- Miss Kelly's bra size gets the final toast? (5, 3)
- Tampico sandwich! (4)
- Lady in *Deep Throat* liking needlework (8)
- Action in this, undeniably (4)

DOWN

- Threat to warplanes; don't start back twice (3-3)
- Gum which I cleverly used partially (6)
- Do violence to help a mere transient (9)
- Defile nothing—this country is extremely beautiful (8)
- Get cross during bank holiday (4)
- Operatic prince, a part in *Ruddigore* (4)
- New makeup for *Newsday* in terms of length (7)
- Make fast accommodation in uprising (4)
- Acrobatic stunt: clapping bear (9)
- From far end he's in anarchy without a ruler (8)
- Dispirited, like this entry? (8)
- Runner-up with bit of gumption was in front and made funny noises (7)
- I'm back, leaving home that's broken in (6)
- Threw rocks on a trip? (6)
- Lined up a brawl (4)
- Frenchman's with Miss Gabor, going up average grade (4)
- Lamb's other identity could be a lie (4)

tion to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the October issue. Winners' names will be printed in the November issue. Winners of the July puzzle, "Crazy Quilt," are Michael A. Kemp, Arlington, Virginia; Laura Unterman, Northridge, California; and Abbe Bershtsky, Brooklyn, New York.

What do you see
when you look at a
new house?



A new neighbor? A good investment? Fallen trees? It depends on your point-of-view.

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The Meltdown That Didn't Happen

by Howard Morland

October 1979 \$1.50

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COOLING WITH THE BUDGET

How Congress
causes inflation
by Tom Bethell



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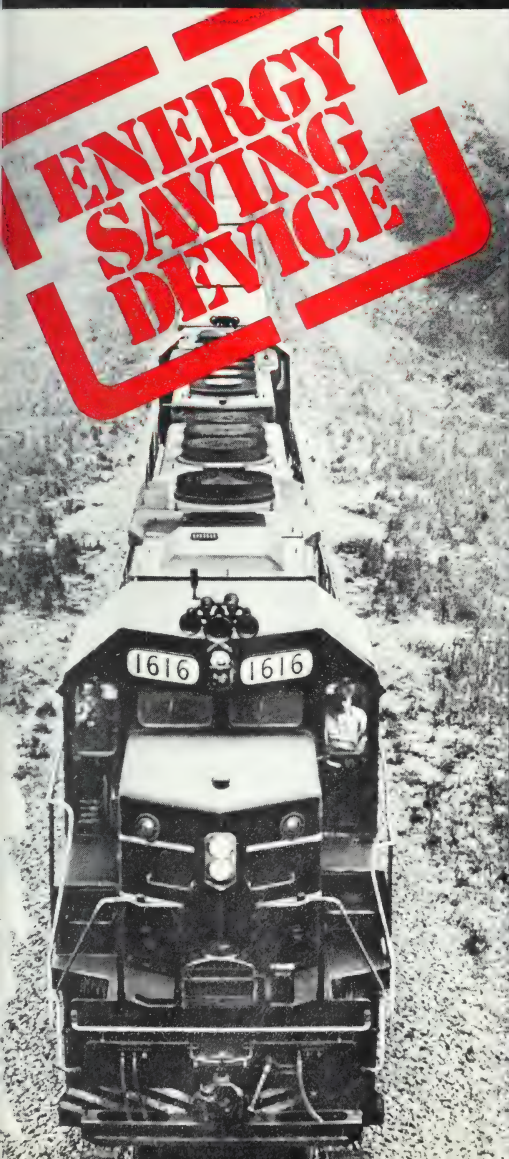
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All the cars we build are powered by internal combustion engines. These engines work by burning petroleum-derived gasoline or diesel fuel under high pressure. So far, petroleum has been the safest, least expensive source of these hydrocarbon fuels, which pack a lot of energy per gallon. But automotive fuels can also be obtained from many other sources, ranging from oil shale to coal and even corn stalks. The problem is to turn these solid materials into safe, convenient, environmentally sound, cost-efficient liquid fuels.

At GM, we have evaluated a variety of domestic resources and alternative fuels.

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Coal is the next best option. Coal can also be turned into gasoline and diesel fuel, but the process is more expensive and complex than that for oil shale. As with oil shale, coal mining also poses environmental problems.

Biomass (vegetation and organic wastes) is another possibility. The main advantage of biomass is that it is a renewable resource. However, biomass is difficult and expensive to collect and process.

The only automotive fuel currently being made that uses biomass is gasohol. Gasohol is a blend of 10% ethyl alcohol and gasoline. The use of gasohol in present-day cars can save gasoline and causes no insurmountable difficulties.

Hydrogen has often been discussed. Although engines can be run on hydrogen, its production potential appears

limited, and the practical problems of safe and efficient distribution and storage haven't yet been solved.

Although electricity isn't a fuel, it can be generated from non-petroleum resources. Some electrically-powered cars are already on the road. The problem is that with current lead-acid batteries they're only capable of traveling relatively short distances between battery charges. We're continuing to do extensive research on advanced zinc-nickel oxide storage batteries.

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This advertisement is part of our continuing effort to give customers useful information about their cars and trucks and the company that builds them.

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Harper's

OCTOBER 1979 FOUNDED IN 1850/VOL. 259, NO. 1553

- Howard Morland* 16 **THE MELTDOWN THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN**
Nobody living near Three Mile Island was evacuated until two days after the reactor leak was discovered. Even then, few in control could say which way was upwind, though everyone's safety depended on it.
- Jude Wanniski* 26 **OIL IN ABUNDANCE**
If the Carter Administration prevails, the United States will spend \$140 billion to process coal into oil and gas. But vast amounts of petroleum remain in the ground, and the money would be better spent in search of it.
- Stan Hager* 34 **IN THE LOGGING WOODS**
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LETTERS

Having a talk with God

An accolade to you and to Lawrence Chickering for his trenchant analysis of President Carter in his review of Wesley Pippert's *The Spiritual Journal of Jimmy Carter* ["Extreme Union," August].

Obviously Carter's God is anthropomorphic. While Carter prays to God for guidance (when in most cases he could and should rely on his native gumption, if any), he never quite claims that God gives him answers, although he implies it. I suspect he often relies on the device recently reported as having been employed by the enlightened president of the Mormon Church. Having made up his mind to admit blacks to the priesthood, the Mormon told God of his decision, but gave Him an opportunity for a veto, if He disagreed. When he heard no dissent, he took silence for approval.

CYRIL B. UPHAM
Washington, D.C.

Down the tube

Stephen Chapman's labeling of the recent Carnegie Commission pronouncements on public television ["Down with Public Television," August] as a papal bull is right on the mark, as any reader patient enough to plow through the whole document will attest.

Mr. Chapman raises the question, a legitimate one, as to whether there should be a public-television system at all, especially since technologies like cable television, videocassettes, and videodiscs make it possible to aim programs at narrow audiences. Unfortunately, these alternate delivery methods do not yet reach enough communities, and they tend to carry more of the same feature films, sporting events, et cetera, albeit uncluttered by commercial messages.

The fact that Americans respond generously to the membership drives of the public-television stations, overly

insistent and offensive as they may be indicates that there is a real demand for open-broadcast programs other than the mindless variety spewed out by the commercial producers.

The problem lies not with the notion of public broadcasting, but with public broadcasters. Without British television production there would be an even greater infestation of rock concerts on public television. In view of the inferiority of expensive series produced in America—e.g., "The Adams Chronicles," "The Scarlet Letter"—when compared with the cultural products of our British cousins, and in view of what passes for serious public-affairs reporting and news analysis on public stations, it is hard to see how the authors of the Carnegie report could argue that public television contains a reservoir of creative and investigative talent that needs to be protected. Whatever talent there is has remained well hidden thus far.

As for those who manage public television: what kinds of alternatives to the network pap can we expect from would-be commercial broadcasters who trumpet loudly every time one of their programs registers on the Nielsen scale, and who, in their attempts to attract large audiences, do not even shy away from scheduling an hour of disco dancing during prime time?

JAMES ZIGERELL
Glenview, Ill.

The grace of Narcissus

Congratulations on publishing Paul Zweig's beautifully written rebuttal, "Collective Dread: The Literature of Doom" [July], to Christopher Lasch and all the other indiscriminate doom-mongers who have made a bugbear out of Freud's formulation of "narcissism" and have taken to exploiting the concept by trumpeting it as if it were a telltale symptom of the End of Days. I agree with Zweig that collectively we are feeling "a sort of end-of-century blues" as we approach the year 2000 in an era of phenomenal change

and upheaval. It's no wonder that some people like Lasch and Peter Marin who perceive change so narrowly become hysterical or unhinged at the prospects. But to pin so much negativity upon "narcissism" when, in fact, it may be one of the saving graces of our century (Zweig referred to Narcissus as a "tutelary god") is just too truncated and unbalanced a view.

SOL KORT
Centre for Continuing Education
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Babes at arms

I think Alexander Theroux, for all his experience of candy ["Matters of Taste," August], doesn't realize that Red Hots and Necco Wafers were never intended to be eaten. (Their flavor underscores this.) They are ammunition, perfectly weighted and shaped for tossing across classrooms while teachers write on chalkboards or step outside for a smoke. It is im-

possible to ignore being hit by a Red Hot, as I or any number of my fellows-in-arms can attest.

This matériel is sold as candy because sugar is cheap (so the munitions-makers prosper handsomely). Also, few school boards are enlightened enough to allow ammunition dispensers on campus if marketed as such.

If the candy-makers' role in student warfare distresses you, however, I might note that a friend of my sister used Neccos to rehearse for her First Communion, the wafers being of similar size.

DALE NELSON
Seaside, Oreg.

Never say die

The article by Ed Zuckerman, "Hiding From the Bomb—Again" [August], would have us give up, which is precisely what our adversaries want us to do.

Mr. Zuckerman quotes Paul Warnke as saying that "No rational leadership

could subject its country to the unexampled devastation that would be punishment for the monstrous crime of initiating a strategic nuclear war." Was Khrushchev rational when he sent his warships toward our shores during the Cuban crisis? He reversed only because we stood up to him. We do not live in a rational world, so leadership often acts without reason. And nuclear terrorism is a new threat.

We who believe in the defense of our nation and who work in civil defense are neither hawks nor doves. We know the hazards of radiation from whatever cause; and most of all we believe in defending ourselves and others who, without love of country, in spite of belittling and trying to destroy, would be trying to save themselves and their families in the face of threat, just as Mr. Zuckerman would.

DOROTHY MERRIAM
County Director/Coordinator
Municipal Civil Defense
and Disaster Services
Pringhar, Iowa

HARPER'S/OCTOBER 1979

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THE DEATH OF KINGS

These translations from the poetry of despair

by Lewis H. Lapham

... of comfort no man speak:
Let's talk of graves, of worms, and
epitaphs;
Make dust our paper, and with
rainy eyes
Write sorrow on the bosom of the
earth.
Let's choose executors, and talk of
wills; . . .
For God's sake, let us sit upon the
ground,
And tell sad stories of the death
of kings . . .

—Richard II

JUDGING BY what I can read of the public record, this fall the American gentry has become enthralled with the romance of failure. President Carter drags himself around the country like a dying king in an old way, weighed down with grief, blaming himself (as well as the oil companies, the American people, his Cabinet secretaries, the Arabs, and the weather) for the misfortunes that have befallen the Republic. The press plays the part of hired mourner, cherishing the sounds in the American body politic as if they were the stigmata of the crucified Christ. Washington columnists compete with professors of diplomatic history for the honor of delivering the funeral oration at the bier of Jimmy Roosevelt.

The peasantry in Iowa produce record harvests of corn and soybeans, sit on suburban lawns in California and Connecticut the capitalist nobility talk solemnly to and fro with glasses of gin in their hands, gesturing vigorously in the direction of the yacht club, bemoaning the ruin of the currency and worrying about the lack of leadership among their public and domestic servants. Nothing works anymore, they say; the world has gone

awry. The Russians have acquired a more impressive collection of weapons than the one purchased by the curators at the Pentagon; in the Third World, ruffians leap and dance; at Burning Tree the caddies have raised their fees.

The more I listen to these sorrowful recitations the more I think of heirs to comfortable fortunes who delight in the display of their weakness. The eloquence of their self-pity sometimes makes it difficult to know what, in fact, they mean to say. The lamentation is likely to persist and wax more piteous during the next twelve months of the Presidential campaigns, and for the convenience of readers who might not be familiar with the poetry of sweet despair, I offer a few translations from the original tear-stained texts.

*Failure of nerve, crisis of confidence,
loss of will.*

Phrases of flattery. Self-blame constitutes an exquisite and expensive form of self-praise. No matter how severe the adjectives, the conversation remains fixed on the subject of supreme interest and importance.

The American press never asks, "How do the Germans and the Japanese manage their economies? What can we learn from their example?" Such questions would distract the attention from the American self. During the present debate on the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty nobody mentions the difficulties confronting the Soviet Union—its prisons, its dwindling oil reserves and inadequate production of wheat, the unhappiness of its citizens and the chance of nationalist uprising among the many peoples

Lewis H. Lapham is the editor of Harper's.

yoked together by a frayed ideology.

For the past eighty years all the best people have complained of neurotic disorders. The doctrines of modernism substitute art for religion, and the lives of the saints (Joyce, Pound, Van Gogh, et alii) demonstrate the relation between neurosis and genius. The acknowledgement of weakness therefore becomes a proof of spiritual refinement, something comparable to a house on the beach at East Hampton or a feather boa bought at an auction on behalf of public television. The neurosis distinguishes its possessor from the anonymous crowd of stolid and capable citizens who endure their lives with a minimum of self-dramatization. Who pays attention to people who don't make piteous cries? Who wants to pay \$100,000 for the movie rights to their chronicles of marriage and divorce? Who bothers to take their photograph for *Vogue*?

It is the fear of not being noticed that prompts so many people (among them President Carter) to make so fatuous a show of their defects. Mr. Carter puts his whole heart into proving himself weak and effeminate, and by so doing he seeks to make himself charming. His weeping confessions aspire to the romance of fan magazines. Like the frequently divorced lady met in a bar at Palm Beach, who whispers the secrets of her self-indulgence and her depravity as if these confidences enfolded her in the cloak of the Queen of the Night, Mr. Carter imagines himself so glorious that anything that impairs his perfection must be thought of as monstrous.

Even when he had been deprived of his kingdom, which he had let fall into disorder by reason of his extravagance

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and indecision, Richard II believed himself omnipotent. He imagined that spiders and heavy-gaited toads would rise up to strike down Bolingbroke's rebellion. What was so hideous about his humiliation was the fact that the indignities of hunger, politics, and death routinely visited upon lesser human beings could in turn be visited upon the majesty of an anointed king.

So also the American gentry, who still believe that they command the tides. They cannot bear to blame the cost of gasoline on their changed circumstances or the shift of the political balance in the world, and so they blame their own lack of attention. This is much more flattering and allows them to preserve the illusion that the rest of the world plays a supporting role in the melodrama of the American self.

Arabs, big government, the press

A nominally egalitarian society sustains itself by trading in both the market of expectation and the market of blame. Politicians and automobile salesmen announce that everybody is created free and equal, deserving of wealth and redemption. Every citizen is a king. Neither the government nor the business interests can make good on this claim, and none of the propagandists can come up with a satisfactory explanation for the unequal division of the spoils. If so many people fail to achieve their heart's desire, then to what or to whom can these unnatural events be attributed? Who cheats so many people out of the life, love, and happiness to which they are entitled under the terms of the social contract? Obviously the fault cannot be found with the individual citizen, and so it must be found elsewhere, preferably within the labyrinths of an unknown abstraction. President Carter blames the American people and dismisses five of his Cabinet secretaries: Philip Roth blames his mother and writes *Portnoy's Complaint*. The more goods that a man has inherited, the larger the number of causes to which he can assign the blame. An owner of a gas station might castigate the Arabs and the oil companies, but a Wall Street lawyer, much more discriminating and refined, blames the House Ways and Means Committee, the Federal Reserve Board, and the tax code.

Catastrophes

Punishments inflicted on people toward whom the speaker feels envy and resentment. The political and literary classes talk about inflation, disarmament, and the energy shortage in the same way they talked about the toy revolutions of the 1960s. They talk at prophetic length, but they do nothing to forestall what they announce as imminent doom. This allows for two possible interpretations. Either they believe that the catastrophe really isn't going to take place, in which event it isn't necessary to construct bomb shelters or design automobiles with four-cylinder engines, or, more probably, they look upon the catastrophe as a form of revenge. Bankers who make speeches about the effects of inflation give the impression that they expect to be in Barbados when the world ends.

Death

A usurper. Over the past twenty years the American bourgeoisie has noticed that otherwise profitable or patriotic acts have unpleasant or unforeseen consequences. The corporations prosper, and the arms merchants sell their goods to illiterate tyrants, but the whales languish, and somebody always gets killed or sent out to sea in a boat. This disturbs people who do not wish to have anything to do with killing, or, to put it more precisely, who like to think that any killing done on their behalf remains safely in the past—buried with the glorious dead who paid their debts to the future at Concord, Gettysburg, Château-Thierry, and Guadalcanal.

The resistance to risks of all kinds and degrees testifies to the much-magnified fear of death. The national obsession with health (cf. the princely sums spent on jogging and diets as well as in the hospitals and research laboratories) reflects the refined sensibility of people grown too delicate for the world.

The prompters of the public alarm observe that with enough effort it is possible to avoid a specific risk (death by asbestos poisoning, say, or lung cancer caused by cigarettes), and so they go on to assume that with even greater and more expensive efforts they can escape all risks and death itself will be denied credit at the better

department stores. Thus the country squanders fortunes on quack doctor and federal safety regulations. Sooner or later a lady with a charge account at Bloomingdale's will bring a lawsuit against the sun.

Public-opinion polls

They perform the function of oracles and Catholic priests. Politicians depend on the polls in the same way that neurotic patients depend on their psychiatrists. The politician puts the question "Did I do right? Am I good boy?" Having been rigged by the politician's pollsters, the statistics offer justification and reassurance. During the Vietnam war President Johnson got into the habit of walking around with sheaves of polls in his pockets. When he felt threatened by self-doubt he would wave the papers in the faces of his attendant reporters, saying that the polls proved that the American people still loved him, that they absolved him of the killing in Indochina. Soon after President Carter told his sad story about the crisis of confidence in the hearts of his countrymen, his office put out the news that he had received 39,000 letters, 77 percent of them favorable.

Oil prices, the Soviet arsenal, the law's delay

Conspiracies, or acts of God. It never occurs to the heirs of the American fortune that if they neglect to save their money, then the miracle of their unearned income must necessarily fade and diminish. Nor does it occur to them that if they shrug off the burden of political power, which entails the cost and nuisance of maintaining fleets and armies, then they will be unable to buy goods in the world market below the prices paid by Ecuador. They complain about the insensitive delay of the bureaucracy in Washington, but it never occurs to them that the government moves so slowly because it has been asked to do so much.

Betrayal

The reason for all our troubles. Like President Carter, the poets of despair remain perpetually innocent. Nothing is ever their fault. They discover themselves betrayed by circumstance or a



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It's said that Albert Einstein was unable to talk—or read—at the usual age.

Is it possible that Einstein was simply too "polite" to do so?

Who cannot remember, as a child, certain faint pressures to *masquerade* as a child?

Who can forget the high school teacher who spotted you for what you were: an overly polite but emerging non-conformist?

If you were the first person in the world to advance the unwelcome notion that the earth was not flat, exactly how long would you have held out?

The really odious thing about thought control is that it stifles not only the innovator but also the innovator's audience. Einstein (and his audience) were treated to indifference, persecution, scorn and consuming flattery.

The reason I am bringing all this up is not to commiserate over the well-known resistance to fresh thinking, but to invite you, and your friends, to personally be present at the time such thinking is first made public.

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crisis of confidence, by their parents, their brokers, and the collision of oil tankers off the coast of Trinidad. They fall into error because they have been wickedly misled or misinformed, and this allows them to feel justifiably sorry for themselves. President Carter says that when he was a boy in school he was taught that the United States had never fought an unjust war. His ignorance is the fault of his teachers.

Individualism

The last, best hope of people who feel themselves superfluous. The other day I had a letter from a reader who said that everybody had become small. This was the trouble with modernism and the twentieth century. No matter what the form or pretension of governments—democratic, totalitarian, oligarchic, revolutionary—the imperatives of state reduced people in size. The dwindling effect accounted for the absence of art and literature. The reader chided me for failing to notice that I was living among dwarfs. How could very small people write large-minded books? Even as recently as the nineteenth century, he said, giants still bestrode the earth. The educated aristocracy commissioned works of art from Beethoven and Ingres; Tolstoy, himself a nobleman and the owner of a thousand serfs, conceived of dramas on a scale commensurate with his lands and estates. But the aristocracies, alas, had been dispossessed, and with them had vanished all hope of enlightened patronage. The tiny victims of the modern state, living in tiny tract houses and thinking tiny thoughts, could write nothing but diaries in which they kept notes of their tiny defeats.

The sense of human possibility expands and contracts like the beating of the human heart. The nineteenth century took pride in the march of learning and the advance of the intellect; the twentieth century shrinks from these campaigns because the vanguard keeps sending back reports of weird monsters and deadly amoebas. The exaggerated claims of the early 1960s give way to exaggerated doubts; absurd confidence relapses into absurd cowardice. In 1962 everybody had power; in 1979 nobody has power. The feverish market in stocks, which reflects a belief in a limitless future, gives way to the feverish market in

gold, which reflects a belief in immortality.

To the extent that men feel themselves small they seek to enlarge the notion of themselves as consumers. They surround themselves with objects and make loud noises at one another through the masks of grinning celebrity; perhaps the spectacle of self will confer upon them the sense of large identity. In the nineteenth century even a rich man could buy relatively few things with which to bolster up his egotism. He could squander his inheritance on women, gambling, furniture, and horses. For his other amusements he had recourse to nothing except his ambition and the largeness of his mind. In the twentieth century small has become beautiful, and so the citizen who would be king orders the miniatures of greatness from the department store catalogue.

Windmills

Symbols representing the loss of childhood. A civilization either looks forward into the future or backward into the past. If the political and literary classes cannot understand the mathematics of a computer or the physics of a nuclear reaction, then how can they think of the future as anything but a terrible darkness? President Carter promises to make the world go away, and the leading political theorists of the age suggest that governments should be made small, more or less along the lines of medieval France or Massachusetts in the eighteenth century.

The dream of Arcadia corresponds to the adoration of youth. Nobody assumes that age can also signify strength. Only the young have power; the old cannot play at immortality.

The dirge of the intellectuals

As the universities come to depend more heavily on the patronage of the federal government and the charitable foundations, so also the professors of the humanities come to resemble minor clerics who have been granted livings and sees and benefices. They get paid to celebrate the mortifications of the spirit, and their woeful pronouncements have the sound of liturgical chants.

Together with the huge sums dis-

tributed through the National Endowments and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the money given to the universities constitutes a donative to the upper middle class. The subsidies correspond to the welfare payments made to the poor. The exegesis of the so-called high culture provides sinners for the younger sons of the capitalist nobility, for the *nouveaux littéraires*, and for the ladies or gentlemen too refined for commerce and trade.

When I listen to academics talk about the prospects of social upheaval, I think of Erwin Chargaff coming across a notice posted on a bulletin board in a German university during the tenure of the Weimar Republic: "In case of rain, the revolution will take place in the hall."

Leaders

All, alas, defunct. The newsmagazines send reporters to Phoenix and Omaha with instructions to look for people resembling the gods and heroes of ancient Greece. The reporters fail to find anybody who fits the description of Odysseus or who can be seen in broad daylight holding a bronze shield and spear.

Because nothing is their fault, and because it is always a Gorgon who puts them at risk, the poets of despair assume that only heroes can restore them to a state of solvency and grace. If we are weak, so the lamentation runs, then somebody else must be strong—either the analyst, the polls, the Arabs, the government, God, or John Connally. The heirs to comfortable fortunes believe that if they make their grief eloquent or obvious enough, if they drive cars at 100 m.p.h. and make drunken spectacles of themselves at debutante dances, then Daddy or the family trustee will, at long last, take pity on them. This is the story of God, but it is also the hope of John Connally's campaign for the Presidency.

In New York, people concede that Mr. Connally is a man of little or no principle, but this, they say, is what is wanted in a world inhabited by thieves and governed not by principle but by force. The only way to deal with desperadoes is to hire a desperado of one's own. □

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THE MELTDOWN THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN

Optimism and inertia at Three Mile Island

by Howard Morland

BACKERS OF NUCLEAR ENERGY say that "nobody died at Three Mile Island," and they are correct. No one has died from the accident there last March. As in *The China Syndrome*, ultimate disaster was avoided—barely. The reactor's emergency cooling system did not fail utterly, and the reactor core remained intact. But we have Providence to thank, not sound engineering and not good judgment. Thousands might have died. Vast land areas might have been contaminated. The potential of that accident just eleven miles southeast of Pennsylvania's state capital is awful to contemplate.

The magnitude of the peril is inherent in the nature of nuclear fission. When Stone Age fire builders extinguished their campfires, the fires were out. The blast furnaces and turbojet engines of our own industrial civilization use the same energy process as a cave dweller's fire. They all extract energy from the combustion of carbon compounds, and all can be turned off by various means that either lower the temperature of the burning fuel or prevent continued contact between the fuel and oxygen. Any fire can be doused or smothered. Not so with nuclear fission.

When a single uranium atom fissions, or splits in half, it immediately releases

180 million electron volts of energy. This energy release is enough to make one pound of uranium equivalent in energy content to 8,000 tons of TNT or to 1,500 tons of coal. If there were no subsequent energy releases associated with fission, it would be an ideal process for running power plants. Unfortunately, there are delayed energy releases that follow nuclear fission, and they cause various problems.

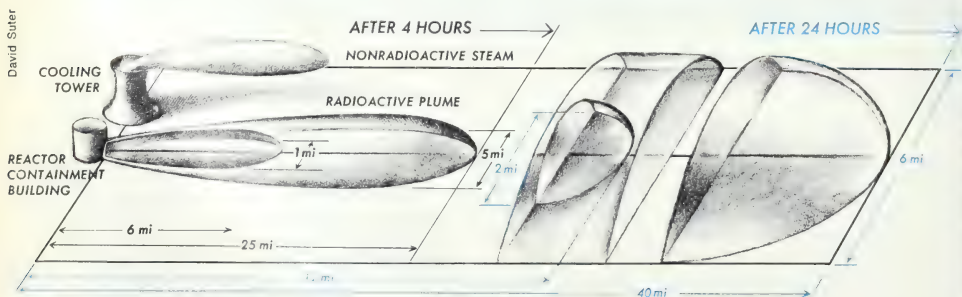
In addition to releasing a prodigious amount of energy, the fissioning of a single uranium atom produces two fission-product atoms that are physically unstable, or radioactive. These fission products release an additional 10 million electron volts of energy in the course of rearranging themselves to achieve nuclear stability. The process is called radioactive decay; no human intervention can speed it up or slow it down. Decades or centuries can pass before the process is completed.

The delayed energy release by fission products undergoing radioactive decay generates heat in much the same way that fission itself generates heat. Because of the heat generated by radioactive decay, a nuclear reactor cannot be completely turned off when a problem develops. The fission reaction can be stopped by insertion of reactor control rods, or

even by loss of the cooling water, which in most civilian reactors is necessary to keep the fission reaction going. But decay heat can be turned off only with the passage of time. For a reactor accident, that time is measured in weeks.

AT 4:00 A.M. on March 28, when control rods rammed into the core of Three Mile Island Unit 2, the fission reaction stopped, and the thermal power of the reactor dropped immediately from 2,700 megawatts to 180 megawatts. By extinguishing the fission reaction, the control rods reduced the power output of the reactor by 93 percent, but the reactor was a long way from "cold shutdown." If the cooling system had failed completely at that moment, the temperature within the core could have risen initially at the rate of 18,000 degrees Fahrenheit per hour, because of decay heat alone. The reactor core could have melted, and pressures and temperatures would have continued to build rapidly even after the core had melted.

The core of a nuclear reactor is the delicate assembly of uranium fuel rods. Howard Morland is a journalist and the author of an article that *The Progressive* has been enjoined from publishing (on "national security" grounds) called "The H-Bomb Secret."



which generate the heat. Cooling water must pass without obstruction between the fuel rods whenever they are hot, regardless of whether their heat is being generated by fission or by radioactive decay. Any interruption in cooling water flow can cause the fuel rods to melt the way a box of birthday candles will melt if left on top of a hot stove. Once the rods have melted, there is no way the hot fuel can be properly cooled. It will form a compact molten blob, and even if cooling water flow is restored the water will flow around the blob, rather than through it, and will not cool it adequately. When the blob gets hot enough it will threaten the structural integrity of the two lines of defense standing between the molten core and people: the steel pressure vessel that holds both the reactor core and its cooling water, and the concrete-and-steel containment building, or dome, that houses the pressure vessel and much of its associated plumbing. The pressure vessel is often called, simply, the reactor. It is the first line of defense. The containment building at Three Mile Island, the second line of defense, was designed to withstand an airplane crash because it is just three miles from the Harrisburg International Airport, but neither it nor the pressure vessel was designed to withstand the forces that would be unleashed by the melting of the reactor core.

At about 5,400 degrees Fahrenheit, the core would become molten and fall into the bottom of the pressure vessel. If there were still any water in the pressure vessel, the exposure of the molten fuel to water could cause a sudden explosion of steam that might have the energy of several tons of TNT. If the pressure vessel were dry, the molten nuclear fuel might melt its way through the basement of the building until it came in contact with ground water. In any case, eventual contact with water would be inevitable. The force of the resulting steam explosion would depend on how rapidly the hot fuel and water were mixed. Industrial accidents involving inadvertent contact between molten metal and water are rather common, and they often result in explosions. However, an accident involving molten reactor fuel would be unusual.

The same nuclear radiation that makes spent reactor fuel physically hot in confined spaces makes it deadly even when vaporized and widely dispersed. Once they had left the reactor building in a cloud of steam, the reactor contents would be sufficiently dispersed to stop the buildup of heat. Traveling with the

wind, invisible particles and gases from the reactor core would begin to bombard living things with ionizing radiation. Ionizing radiation causes biological damage by attacking the complex molecules that make up living matter and splitting them apart. Large doses cause radiation sickness, which itself can be fatal, and small doses increase the likelihood of cancer.

NUCLEAR ENERGY proponents often explain with great patience that reactors cannot explode like atom bombs. Nuclear power reactors such as the one near Harrisburg use low-enriched fuel, and thus cannot explode with nuclear force. What they can do is leave the buildings in which they reside and march across the countryside like the angel of death.

In the days immediately following the Three Mile Island accident, newspapers around the country carried maps of the Harrisburg area that showed concentric circles of danger around the site of the plant. The implication for people who looked at the maps without carefully reading the accompanying text was misleading. One might assume that if the

worst had happened, radiation would have spread outward from the plant the way ripples spread radially from a pebble splash in calm water. Such would have been the case only on a calm day.

Even a slight breeze would send the radioactive cloud rolling along the ground. If the meteorological conditions were stable, as they were during much of the first four days after the accident began, that airy collection of radioactive particles and gases would be prevented from rising to a safe altitude above the ground. It would hug the terrain, coating everything in its path with material from the reactor core, poisoning a cigar-shaped area downwind of the plant.

On March 28, at least one Harrisburg citizen stationed himself at the Three Mile Island visitor center on the east bank of the Susquehanna and watched the containment building for signs of rupture. His plan was to observe the plume as it left the building. He would then head in the opposite direction by car. The scheme was basically sound as long as not too many other people adopted it and caused a traffic jam. For the first few minutes the plume would hold enough moisture to form a visible steam cloud, signaling both the exact moment

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THE MELTDOWN THAT DIDN'T HAPPEN

of release and the direction of the wind. The would-be nuclear refugee sagely assumed that it would be best to be upwind of the plant.

Fleeing would be one's only hope. Certainly, fallout shelters would be of no use in a reactor accident. People who remember the 1950s may recall that the larder for a properly stocked fallout shelter contained a two-week supply of everything. The reasoning was that if one could stay underground for the first two weeks after a nuclear attack, the background radiation level would have diminished a thousandfold, enough to allow for a mad dash to a safe place.

At the end of two weeks, the intensity of radiation emitted by nuclear reactor debris, however, would still be one-sixth as great as it was one hour after the accident. Land and buildings contaminated by vaporized reactor materials will remain highly contaminated for a long time. There is little incentive to stay buried inside a contaminated region waiting for the radioactivity to diminish, because it diminishes so slowly. Immediate evacuation is the most practical course of action.

There is another reason fallout shelters would have been essentially useless at Harrisburg. Particles of fallout from nuclear weapons are about one millimeter in diameter, the size of the period at the end of this sentence. They fall like snowflakes and settle on the tops of exposed objects. Tightly closed doors and windows will keep them out of buildings and shelters. Filters can filter them. The radioactive plume from a melted reactor core, on the other hand, will consist of particles one micron in diameter, far too small to see. Such particles do not settle and are difficult to filter. They are called aerosols. They are dissolved in the air, like sugar in water, and wherever the air goes they can go. Radioactive particles and vapors can enter a building through small openings and then stick to ceilings and walls the way smog particles coat the windows of an automobile. A fallout shelter therefore can become contaminated on the inside as the plume passes overhead.

IN THE COURSE of every five hours and thirty-five minutes of normal operation, the Three Mile Island Unit 2 reactor generated the same quantity and mix of fission products as did the Hiroshima bomb—about twenty-six ounces. On March 28, the inventory

of fission products in the reactor included about 700 Hiroshima bombs' worth of strontium 90 and of cesium 137, fifty Hiroshima bombs' worth of iodine 131, and a single Hiroshima bomb's worth of technetium 99m (some fission products decay more quickly than others). One hour after shutdown, the core of Three Mile Island Unit 2 contained as much radioactivity as 9,000 tons of radium, even though the material responsible for that radioactivity weighed little more than a ton. "Spent" reactor fuel is more radioactive than anything found in nature. If half of this deadly mixture of reactor garbage were scattered by the wind and deposited in the kind of pattern postulated for weapon fallout, within four hours it could deliver a lethal dose of radiation to anybody inside an area six miles long and one mile wide (an area the size of western Manhattan between the World Trade Center and the Hayden Planetarium). Radiation sickness could be expected inside an area twenty-two miles long by three miles wide. By the end of the first full day, the lethal area could have doubled in dimensions to twelve miles long by two miles wide, and the radiation sickness area could be forty miles long by six miles wide. The lethal area might eventually grow to a maximum length of fifty miles, with the zone of increased cancer risk stretching several hundred miles downwind.

So people in Philadelphia, one hundred miles to the east, would not drop dead in the streets because of a meltdown accident at Three Mile Island. If the wind were blowing in any direction other than northwest, even nearby Harrisburg would be spared.

JAN BEYEA, a physicist at Princeton University, is one of the few independent researchers who has studied the possibilities in detail and who will speculate freely about the human aspects of nuclear accidents. His office is cluttered with stacks of computer printouts and copies of reports he has done on hypothetical meltdowns in Sweden, West Germany, and New Jersey. According to Dr. Beyea, victims of a meltdown would receive radiation from three distinct sources: the plume, their own lungs, and their contaminated environment.

As the plume drifted across the ground like a giant amoeba, it would irradiate everything it touched. Gamma radiation emanating from the plume would

penetrate easily through the walls and ceilings of houses. Although the radiation itself would not be visible, the phrase used by one member of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to describe it is "shine from the plume." If eyes were Geiger counters, the plume would appear as a radiant fog bathing everything in its path in an eerie light. The plume might pass quickly in a single "puff" lasting ten minutes or less, or it might be long and thin and take some time to pass a given point. In either case the direct dose to people on the ground from "plume shine" would be about half the total dose they received in the first four hours.

As it moved along, the plume would leave behind a wide path of contaminated people and objects. Unless the people were able to seal themselves inside virtually airtight buildings during passage of the plume, they would ingest enough radioactive aerosol into the lungs to give themselves, eventually, a further dose equal to the one they received from plume shine. Once inside the lungs, the radioactive materials would be picked up by the blood and carried to all parts of the body. Especially important among ingested contaminants would be iodine 131, which would collect in the thyroid gland.

There is nothing one could do to minimize the dose from plume shine or from inhalation of the plume after the plume had passed, but rapid evacuation would minimize the dose from the third source, the contaminated environment. If the victims tarried long in their radioactive homes and neighborhoods, they would continue to absorb radiation from the walls and rooftops of their houses and from the ground. Within a matter of weeks, such radiation could add up to a fatal dose anywhere inside a 500-square-mile area. Evacuation of an enormous region would thus become essential in order to prevent thousands of acute radiation fatalities.

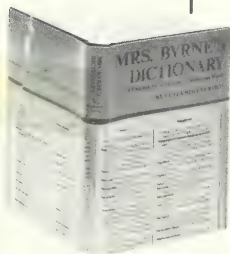
Jan Beyea believes the initial fatalities in a place like Harrisburg could be limited to 100 persons. Although the lethal zone could be roughly the size and shape of Manhattan Island by the end of a full day, Harrisburg is not Manhattan. Harrisburg could presumably be evacuated much faster than a large urban area, and, because the Three Mile Island reactor is eleven miles away, there would be about twelve hours in which to accomplish the evacuation if the goal were merely to avoid early fatalities.

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Dr. Beyea also suggests that efforts should be made to keep individual doses well below 100 rads, the threshold for acute radiation sickness.

It might not be possible to keep the individual doses of Harrisburg residents below 100 rads unless the evacuation were begun in advance of the arrival of the plume. At a range of eleven miles, Harrisburg is so close to the reactor that the plume might not be well dispersed by the time it arrived. The direct effects of passage of the plume overhead could give Harrisburgers radiation sickness even if they left town within minutes after the plume passed.

It is important to note that the plume itself would in no way be detectable by human senses once it had left the immediate vicinity of the reactor. It would not be visible. It would have no smell, no taste, no warmth, no sound. Citizens would be utterly dependent on the authorities for all information about the crisis, including the fact that there was a crisis at all.

THE FIRST HINT the reactor operators had that a meltdown might be possible at Three Mile Island came at 5:30 in the morning of March 28, when sensing devices detected increased numbers of neutrons apparently coming through the walls of the pressure vessel. That hint was misinterpreted by reactor operators who were trying frantically to figure out why certain pumps were vibrating. At 4:00 that morning a routine malfunction in the plumbing system had caused the reactor to shut itself down automatically. Unknown to the operators, a malfunctioning safety valve had then begun to slowly empty the pressure vessel of water. The malfunctioning of that safety valve was crucial. By 5:30 the pressure vessel was running dry. The core was no longer totally immersed in water and was in danger of melting.

Parts of the core were being cooled only by steam, which cannot cool as effectively as water. Operators thought the high neutron counts meant that there was insufficient boron (the chemical element used to stop the chain reaction in nuclear fission) in the reactor, when it actually meant there was insufficient water. The mistake was akin to thinking there is too little soap in the washing machine when the real problem is that the water is draining out. At 6:22, the stuck-open safety valve was finally discovered

and closed, but it then became apparent that the fuel core had been damaged by heat. The fate of the reactor was hanging by a thread, and nobody knew how thin that thread was.

The reactor's decay-heat output was down to twenty-five megawatts, one percent of its full power output, but the cooling water system was now disabled by steam pockets and a large hydrogen bubble that obstructed water flow. There was no way of knowing how badly the fuel core had been damaged. If pieces of uranium fuel were to begin dropping from the core into the bottom of the pressure vessel, the dreaded meltdown would be under way. Operators waited another half-hour, a half-hour that could have meant life or death to many nearby people, and then made the first telephone call to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

John Comey, PEMA's public information officer, says there is still a question about whether Metropolitan Edison was negligent in failing to notify emergency management authorities sooner. It is doubtful that earlier notification would have made much difference, however, because until March 28 few people outside the local antinuclear activist organization had seriously considered the need for an evacuation plan. If the reactor had begun to melt at 6:50 in the morning, the authorities were prepared to blow the air-rads sirens and take over the local radio stations, but there would have been a lot of ad lib in the broadcast message. It is anybody's guess how those citizens who woke up and turned on their radios would have responded.

The National Weather Service record for 6:50 in the morning of March 28 shows that the wind was calm. A clear sky had allowed much of the previous day's heat to radiate into outer space, cooling the ground and leaving the air warm by comparison. Warm air above a cool surface layer constitutes a temperature inversion, which is a normal weather condition in the early morning hours—and also the worst possible weather for a nuclear disaster. An invisible inversion layer would trap the plume between the ground and an altitude of about 1,000 feet. Calm weather would keep it from moving, which would temporarily protect people several miles away at the expense of those closer to the reactor. An hour later, however, winds were blowing gently toward the west at ten miles per hour. Not many people live directly west of the power

plant, except the few hundred residents of Goldsboro, Pennsylvania, two miles away.

At 7:24 the situation at Three Mile Island was "upgraded" from a Site Alert to a General Emergency, and a number of state and county agencies were notified, as they would have been in the event of impending nuclear war. Jar Beyea believes that the area within a five-mile radius should have been evacuated as soon as the possibility of a meltdown was evident. "There was nothing to lose by getting those people out of the most dangerous area," he says, "except the nuclear industry. We might have lost the nuclear industry."

By early afternoon enough of the now notorious hydrogen gas bubble had been vented from the pressure vessel and trapped in the containment building to form an explosive mixture in the atmosphere surrounding the pressure vessel. In fact, at 1:50 P.M., the hydrogen mixture actually did explode, and with several times the force that is normally required to flatten a brick building, but the containment building was strong enough to withstand the shock. It was not until the following evening that operators even noticed that the explosion had taken place.

At the time of the hydrogen explosion the wind was blowing directly toward Harrisburg. Had that explosion triggered any further malfunctions in the crippled emergency cooling systems or in the heat-damaged reactor core, the people of Harrisburg would have had no more than one hour's warning before the containment building was breached by the force of a runaway core melt. Several hundred thousand people would have had to flee for their lives, and to abandon their homes for decades. It was probably the most dangerous moment of the entire crisis, and it passed unnoticed for a day and a half.

THE ACCIDENT had quickly progressed beyond the point that reactor accidents are never supposed to reach. By 5:30 in the morning many millions of dollars of damage had been done to Metropolitan Edison's generating equipment. By 1:50 in the afternoon, the entire billion-dollar investment was a dangerous piece of radioactive junk. The reactor was out of control.

On Thursday evening, March 29, reactor operators realized for the first time

how close they had come to a core melt and how close they still were. The rate of decay heat output was still ten megawatts, and it would take two weeks of waiting before that rate was reduced by half. They would not know until many months later how badly the core had been damaged in the early morning hours of March 28, but they now knew that the situation might remain critical for weeks.

At noon on Friday Pennsylvania Governor Richard Thornburgh recommended immediate evacuation of all pregnant women and pre-school children within five miles of the reactor. No attempt was made to discriminate between towns that were upwind of the reactor and those downwind. The winds on Friday were light and variable, and for most of the early morning they had been calm. At dawn they were blowing toward the east at three miles per hour, at noon they were blowing to the west at six miles per hour, and at sundown they were blowing northwesterly, toward Harrisburg, at eight miles per hour.

The Pennsylvania State Response Team, composed of representatives of about fifteen state agencies, moved into PEMA's underground offices on Friday and began planning an evacuation of everyone within ten miles of the reactor. By Friday evening the criteria had changed, and they were working on a plan to evacuate everyone within twenty miles. By Saturday night, the twenty-mile evacuation plan was reasonably complete, but, according to Kenneth Lamson, the operations director of PEMA, by that time many "had departed the area" on their own.

No general evacuation was ever ordered. A combination of optimism and human inertia prevented the evacuation plans from being put into effect.

The fact that Harrisburg was not evacuated on March 30 or before implies very strongly that a precautionary evacuation will never be ordered in a reactor accident. Jan Beyea is confident that if the core had actually begun to melt—and if the operators had known it was melting—the proper warnings would have been issued. But as long as the reactor operators felt there was any possibility of keeping the core in one piece there were strong incentives to remain optimistic. When a real nuclear disaster happens in this country, many of the victims will be evacuated directly to hospitals, where they will die. □

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• *Third*, profits generate enormous tax revenues which help foot the bill for our nation's vast social programs and government projects.

Profits are the lifeblood of our American economic system. They should be celebrated, not condemned; encouraged, not assailed.

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2. Permit a faster rate of depreciation for capital equipment.

3. Restructure our tax system to encourage personal savings and investment.

4. Reduce government over-regulation that raises costs, lowers productivity and provides no real benefit to society.

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And that, we think you'll agree, would really be "obscene".

The Chase logo, featuring the word "CHASE" in a bold, sans-serif font, with a stylized graphic of vertical bars of varying heights to its left.

OIL IN ABUNDANCE

Without taxes or synthetic fuel

by Jude Wanniski

DESPITE PRESIDENT CARTER's ten days of struggling at Camp David to find a solution to the nation's energy shortages, he has moved further away from understanding the problem. Doubling his speed and losing sight of his goal, the President concluded that only massive intervention by the federal government could solve the problem, when in fact it is the energy and economic policies of the federal government that created it.

For all his talk of having consulted a cross-section of American society during these deliberations, Mr. Carter did not meet with a producer of any kind. Not an oil producer. Not even a farmer. He met with Democratic politicians, labor leaders, environmentalists, preachers, favorite corporate managers, obsolete Keynesian economists, stars of the news media, selected bankers, and state and local bureaucrats. The only energy expert consulted was Thornton Bradshaw of Atlantic Richfield, popular in the White House for having endorsed the windfall-profits tax that his company no doubt imagines will finance the conversion of its own vast coal holdings into synthetic oil and gas.

If there were a serious chance the President could find the support in the country and in Congress to implement his program, there would be cause for alarm. Taxing \$140 billion from the private sector—to use the President's figure—to finance a synthetic-fuel, solar-energy program in the next decade

would so decrease the efficiency of the stumbling American economy that the ensuing recession with inflation would guarantee Jimmy Carter's departure from the White House.

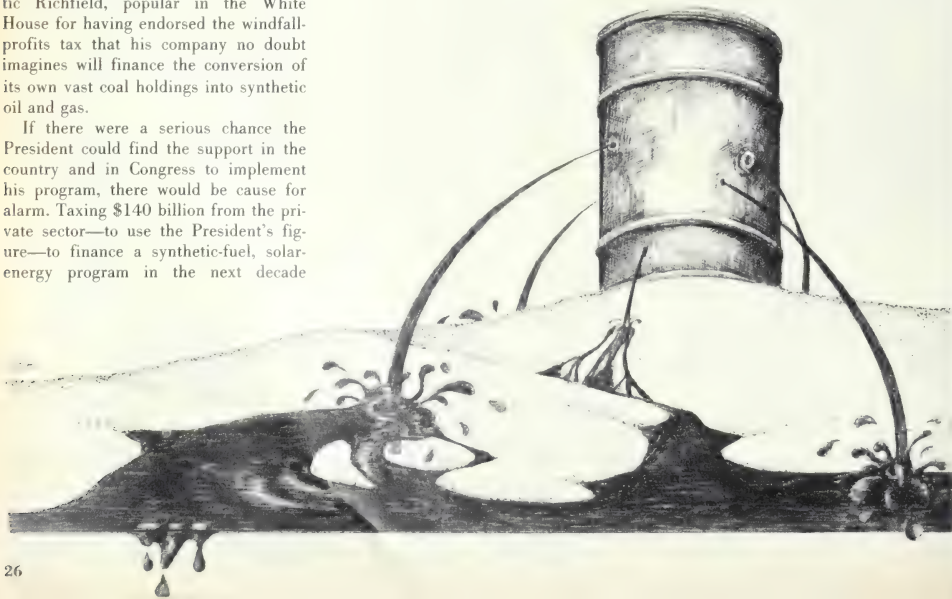
The President is the southern self-proclaimed populist who ran against the government in 1976. How remarkable that he would wrestle with the energy issue for three years—and for ten days at Camp David—and decide to throw a colossal amount of federal money at the problem. Even as Carter was at Camp David, editorials and news columns in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal* warned of the enormous costs of synthesizing oil from coal—synfuel, as it is called. With great luck, the scheme may yield one million barrels a day by 1990, these newspapers reported after consulting experts in the field. Yet the decontrol of crude-oil prices, without a windfall tax on domestic production, would yield an additional 2 million bar-

rels per day by 1985, according to testimony before the Senate Finance Committee by the Independent Petroleum Association of America. The projections, based on established coefficients between price, exploration, and finding rates, have not been challenged by the Department of Energy.

This information has eluded the President. Worse, he seems to ignore the dimensions of the problem, his own plan, and the international economics of energy.

OIL IS FOUND in abundance only if a great many people are looking for it at once in all sorts of unlikely places," Ruth Sheldon Knowles wrote twenty years ago in her history of the American

Jude Wanniski is president of Polyconomics, Inc., and the author of *The Way the World Works: How Economies Fail and Succeed* (Basic Books).





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oil industry, *The Greatest Gamblers*. That insight is vital to understanding why there is an energy shortage in the world today. It is not just that insufficient numbers of people are looking for oil and gas in the United States—although the policies of the federal government discourage domestic oil and gas exploration. Too few people are looking for oil and gas all over the world, because most foreign governments discourage exploration in unlikely places. These policies, which could change tomorrow, in a year, or five years from now, prevent the private capital markets from financing the development of synthetic fuels, because an unanticipated change in foreign governments' policies toward domestic oil exploration could wash away all private synfuel schemes with a flood of inexpensive, conventional oil and gas.

Liquid petroleum that comes from a man-made hole in the ground under its own pressure constitutes only one percent of all the oil in the earth's crust. The rest is "heavy," the shales and tar sands that must be extracted at great expense. If you took all the liquid petroleum produced from all the wells drilled on earth since the first, at Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859, and poured it into a lake the size of Chicago, roughly 227 square miles, the 330 billion barrels the earth has yielded so far would fill the lake to a depth of only 300 feet. The estimated petroleum, worldwide, that could be recovered at current prices and technology would fill the lake to a depth of 2,300 feet.

Even this amount may seem worrisome, until we add in a number of important facts. In 120 years, about 3.2 million oil wells have been drilled into the planet's crust. Of this number, 2.4 million were drilled in the forty-eight continental states of the United States, and most of these in the "oil patch," as oilmen refer to the oil-producing southern states. The rest of the world has been relatively unexplored, especially former colonial nations of Africa and Asia.

Of the 645,500 exploratory wells drilled on earth by the end of 1975, 616,000, or 95.4 percent, were drilled in the industrial countries. Africa, Latin America, South and Southeast Asia, and China have barely been touched. The United States accounts for 482,000 of the exploration wells, 74.7 percent of the total, and 34.9 percent of the oil in that imaginary Chicago lake of oil. The reason is not simply that the United States has had the skilled manpower, technol-

ogy, capital, and market, but that it has had policies conducive to exploration and a stable government that has protected the property rights of its private landowners. Landowners have possessed the mineral rights to oil discovered on their property. The indigenous exploration industry could develop here because individual explorers could lease the mineral rights from private landowners and drill, with the sure knowledge that the explorer and the landowner would possess any oil discovered, and that high risk might yield high reward.

In addition, the U.S. government did not hoard land in the name of the collective interest, but sold the majority of western lands at \$1.25 an acre to encourage settlement. Where this Jeffersonian pattern was not followed, there has been scant exploration. The U.S. government, for example, owns almost 90 percent of Nevada's 110,000 square miles, and much of Nevada has not been explored. Alaska, too, has been relatively untouched by oil exploration, and increasingly the environmentalists, with the eager assistance of President Carter, are

keeping it this way by closing off public lands to any kind of mineral exploration. Even before the Carter Presidency, almost 500 million acres of federal lands, an area three times the size of Texas, had been effectively closed to mineral exploration. President Carter has closed off another 185 million acres, and some of his people would like to close off more. The North Slope oil field in Alaska, the largest field discovered in the United States (the East Texas field being second), covers an area of only 400 square miles in a state of 566,000 square miles.

IN MOST DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, even in those with relatively stable governments, the conditions that fostered oil exploration in the United States are absent. Governments keep title either to most land or to the mineral rights of privately owned land. Income taxes are so confiscatory that should a native landowner possess mineral rights, he probably could not find native capital and labor willing to explore the land, as

Country/Region	Approximate Number of Wells (50,000 each)
Australia & New Zealand	2
Japan	1
Canada	3
Western Europe	2
U.S.S.R.	15
United States	100

Regions on the right side of the plot:

- Middle East
- China
- South & Southeast Asia
- Africa & Madagascar
- Latin America

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the government would capture the rewards through taxation. Governments will lease lands to the major international oil companies to explore, but these companies will look only in places where oil is most likely to be found, where seismology can at least hint at probable finds. Most oil, however, cannot be tracked by seismology, for, like the East Texas field, it is trapped in complex geology and will yield only to myriad explorers taking long shots. One half-joking rule of thumb among the international oil companies drilling in unstable countries is that you should try to pay all costs and make a small profit with the first tanker of oil that leaves the country, on the assumption that what oil remains will be nationalized or confiscated by taxation.

Madagascar, off the southeast coast of Africa, for example, is almost the size of Texas, and lies in one of the world's largest sedimentary basins where oil is most likely to be found. Prior to 1975, the French controlled the island and there was almost no exploration, possibly because the French believed that if oil was discovered they would be pitched out. Since 1975, the government and the international oil companies have been wary of one another, and as a result only eighty-three wells have been drilled on the island. Even in secure, developed parts of the world, the combination of high levels of government land ownership and steep personal taxation deters extensive exploration. Most of Australia's 3 million square miles is held in collective ownership. In 1978, a mere fifty-three exploratory wells were sunk, twice the number drilled in the previous year. In the Middle East, there is little exploration, the sheikhs having no desire to find and produce oil at a rate that would diminish the price they can command for their known reserves. Since 1974, the Saudis have averaged a mere ten exploratory wells a year, Iraq only one a year, and the entire Middle East only ninety-five a year.

Enormous amounts of conventional oil are waiting to be discovered, and will be once governments around the world—including the United States—are prepared to match the high risks of exploration with commensurate rewards. And here, President Carter wants to tax between \$140 billion and \$200 billion from the domestic industry in the next decade, at the same time as he is shutting off more and more government lands to exploration, to finance synthetic-fuel projects

that can, at best, produce a dribble of oil while exacting severe costs from the landscape. This is to be done in the name of energy independence, to free us from OPEC's alleged ability to set prices. Yet as Rep. David Stockman of Michigan has pointed out, even if by some miracle the government can produce 2.5 million barrels a day of synfuel by 1990, it will still be unable to control the world price. The synfuel supply will go into the world's base supplies of oil, and a country can influence the world price only if it can control the marginal supply. If, in other words, the United States were willing to shut down the synfuel plants when the world oil price got *too low* and crank it up again when the price got *too high*, it could influence the world price as the Texas Railroad Commission used to do, by regulating the output of the Texas oil fields.

THE CASE AGAINST energy alternatives, including solar energy, is not that they will not free the United States from OPEC's pricing; OPEC's pricing is a function of U.S. monetary policy anyway. The reason is that the international and domestic potential for existing petroleum and gas is so enormous that synthetic fuels will be uneconomical well into the next century. If, in the 1980s, the United States were to increase only slightly the rewards for domestic exploration, or if a feeble attempt were made by governments in the developing world to do likewise, the relative price of world oil would resume its historic decline. The United States would then either be forced to scrap the uneconomical synthetic-fuel program or drain, through taxation, the rest of the economy for an interminable period to keep it operating.

In microcosm, the problem is the same as that of the proposed natural-gas pipeline from Alaska to the Midwest, which President Carter accuses the Alaska oil companies of dragging their feet on. By the most optimistic estimates, the pipeline would cost \$10 billion, and the gas delivered in Chicago would cost \$3.50 per thousand cubic feet. The pipeline cannot be built because no investor can count on anyone's buying \$3.50 gas five or ten years from now. Should a President and Congress dedicated to increasing the supply of oil and gas be elected in 1980, and should government controls be lifted from production and pricing, natural gas would sell at much

less than \$3, according to the Department of Energy's own 1977 report, the so-called MOPPS study that the Carter Administration suppressed. Mr. Carter now proposes to pay \$1.5 billion for the pipeline project, but even that will fail to make the gas competitive. As Congressman Stockman has pointed out, through 1975 "97 percent of the non-North American natural-gas resource base had yet to be disturbed by a production-well bore. Now this potential resource negligible in dimension. The remaining natural-gas resource base outside of North America may total the equivalent of 1.4 trillion barrels, a quantity of energy equal to four times all of the crude oil that has ever been produced." Because the domestic price of natural gas has been kept low by government control for twenty-five years, almost all domestic exploration has aimed at finding crude oil, not gas. Freeing the price of natural gas would encourage more exploration in the continental United States, and this cleanest of fuels would be produced in such quantity that it would not only displace nuclear and coal as serious competitors, but also reduce demand for imported petroleum. The Alaska pipeline could be built only if the government promises to buy \$3.50 (or \$4 or \$5) gas that it would transmit while there are plentiful supplies at \$2.25, and to pay the difference out of general revenues. The alternative would be to force customers in the Midwest to pay the tab through regulated utility rates; however, midwestern commercial and farming interests would become uncompetitive with areas not so bound.

BY ALL RIGHTS, the Carter tax-and-spending energy scheme ought to fail in Congress after it is debated this autumn. The President has no mandate to sustain it. Neither in his 1976 election nor in the 1978 Congressional elections were voters asked to consider and ratify such a grandiose government energy program. Indeed, in the 1976 campaign, President Carter was identified with government decontrol of energy and greater reliance on private business for solutions. President Ford, although he did not beat the drums for it, was still identified with Vice-President Rockefeller's \$100-billion program of synfuel subsidies. The 1978 Congressional elections provided sharp gains for free-market candidates over government interventionists, especially in the Senate.



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The Senate is where the President's energy program should unravel. Reporters assessing the Carter energy speeches have pointed out that Congress was "already ahead" of the President in legislating a mammoth synthetic-fuel program as well as the windfall-tax revenues to finance it. But beneath the surface, the whole idea of an emergency energy scheme had been doing poorly on the financial end. In late June, the segment of the oil industry that would be devastated by the proposed excise tax on domestic production—the 10,000 independent producers who drill 90 percent of the exploratory wells—finally had their case heard on Capitol Hill, even as the major oil companies were accepting the inevitability of the tax. In a surprising vote on June 28, the House accepted a substitute amendment to the tax the President wanted, making it temporary instead of permanent and also reducing its effective bite. This 236-183 vote was a blow to White House strategists, who realized that the Senate Finance Committee and Chairman Russell Long would, in turn, take every opportunity to weaken the tax on domestic producers and produce a shadow of the bill the President wants. The Administration could see this inevitable path of defeat and knew that only something dramatic could give it a grip on the Senate. Camp David followed.

The melodrama of the President's Camp David retreat produced a moment of national enthusiasm for a synthetic-fuel program. The President did, after all, heighten public discussion about the energy issue to a level above that of clogged service stations. And, tempted to be bold, he placed the price tag of \$140 billion on his program. The major oil companies, who see themselves as recipients of this largesse, either in peddling their billions of tons of coal to the government—like Atlantic Richfield and Exxon—or in getting government contracts to build synthetic-fuel plants, have naturally applauded the program. So has George Meany of the AFL-CIO, who envisions all that work for the building trades at cost-plus. The National Association of Manufacturers can be expected to make the same calculations, especially those member companies that believe they are in a good position to share the federal golden goose.

But the \$140-billion cost of the program concerns the electorate, which understands that people, not oil, pay taxes. The expectation of dozens of shale-conversion stations or coal-liquefaction

plants pouring fumes into the atmosphere has roused environmentalists. Sen. William Proxmire calls the synthetic-fuel scheme the "SST of the Eighties," and can be counted on to lead the charge against it in the Senate. Mike Gravel of Alaska, a liberal Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, is alarmed at the implications of the windfall tax on his state's petroleum industry and vows a filibuster against it. Sen. Abraham Ribicoff, a Connecticut Democrat and also a member of the Senate Finance Committee, has become more outspoken against the idea of taxing domestic production. The mood of the committee as it recessed for August was to exempt the taxation of newly discovered oil, wells that produce less than twenty barrels per day, and small producers—up to perhaps 1,000 barrels per day. The tax may still be beaten altogether.

THIS POSSIBILITY does not, however, take into account the determination and resourcefulness of the forces behind this mammoth tax and spending scheme. It will be hard for the Senate to resist. Democrats and Republicans, who have been held down by tightening budgets for several years, regard the excise tax revenues as a government windfall. Bruce Bartlett, a Senate staff member, writing in the August 6 and 20 issue of *Inquiry*, suggests where the money might go:

Senator Henry Jackson has come up with his own energy bill that would, among other things, authorize \$5 billion to build fifteen synfuel plants. In order to spread the wealth around and attract co-sponsors, Jackson made a point of specifying the following projects:

—\$500 million for the Solvent Refined Coal I project in Kentucky (supported by Senators Wendell Ford and Walter Huddleston);

—\$700 million for the SRC II project in West Virginia (supported by Senator Robert Byrd);

—More than \$1 billion for high- and low-BTU coal gasification projects in Ohio and Louisiana (supported by Senators Howard Metzenbaum and Bennett Johnston);

—Geothermal plants now tentatively set for Idaho, California, and New Mexico locations (supported by Senators Frank Church, Alan Cranston, and Pete Domenici);

—\$300 million in loan guarantees for an urban and industrial waste conversion plant (supported by Senator Bill

Bradley of New Jersey); and

—\$250 million for a fuel-cell demonstration program pushed by United Technologies Corporation of Connecticut (supported by Senator Lowell Weicker).

Business and labor see only the first order individual gains of such largesse. They cannot see the colossal drain on the economy as a whole, which will drag down the standard of living for all Americans, themselves included. The parallels with 1929 are eerie. Fifty years ago exactly an engineer was in the White House as the Hawley-Smoot Tariff Act was under consideration in Congress. The same autarchic forces that were behind the industrial independence of Fortress America are now behind the Carter plan of energy independence. Business and labor backed Hawley-Smoot, which would shut out foreign imports with a massive tax. Now the President would hold crude imports to 1977 levels with a quota—which surely has the effect of discouraging the rest of the world from looking for oil to send to this biggest market—and he would impose the tax internally. Again, business and labor eye the pork barrel. As Congressman Stockman put it, in his important essay in the fall, 1978, *Public Interest*:

The decision to eschew an economic policy of trading on the world market for the 90 percent of the non-U.S. oil and gas resource base that remains to be developed in favor of a cramped, inward-looking policy of autarchy may prove to be the most costly national error of the last half of the twentieth century—if it is not soon reversed.

At that point in the summer of 1929, it still seemed as if the internationalists might win. A majority coalition in the Senate still opposed the tariff. October, 1929, when the Senate coalition crumbled is when it became clear that the internationalists had lost. Should the present engineer win a similar victory for autarchy in 1979, the difference would be in a less palpably dramatic stock market crash. In 1929, the dollar still had a monetary standard—it was tied to gold—so all declines of value were real, there being no inflation. Now, inflation masks the decline in stock values. In the past eighteen months, relative to gold, the value of dollar-denominated financial assets has plummeted by 50 percent. With inflation, crashes take place quietly, but with a decrease in the nation's economic vitality that is as severe as the drain of the Depression. □

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IN THE LOGGING WOODS

Proud fatalism and preventable death

by Stan Hager

IN THE PREDAWN CHILL of an early October morning, two oddly dressed men leave their pickup parked by a dirt road in the Sierra Nevada and begin trudging up a steep, brush-covered hillside. They are dressed in heavy black pants, gray "hickory" shirts, massive boots studded with inch-long caulks, and battered hard hats. Each carries a chain saw over his shoulder, a gallon of oil, two and a half gallons of gas, his lunch, water bag, ax, fifty-foot tape for measuring logs, fire extinguisher, shovel, and assorted tools. The older man, Martin, separates from his son about halfway up the slope and walks side-hill for a hundred yards or so in the blue-gray dimness to the place where he had stopped felling timber the day before. He is breathing heavily and already perspiring beneath the accustomed weight of his gear.

The autumn push is on, with mills driving their crews to get in every possible stick of timber before winter slaps ten feet of snow over the forests. Martin, his two brothers, and his son have

worked eleven days straight in an effort to stay ahead of the tractors, which are hauling logs out of the woods as quickly as the men can cut them. As the sky lightens, a north wind rises and rattles the frost-laden branches through which the men moves. The going is easier when Martin reaches the area of downed timber. Here the forest is wheat-field dense, and he is able to walk the giant stalks—felled side by side and neatly limbed and bucked (cut into logs)—the rest of the way up to the dark wall of standing trees. Working his way uphill, he hears his son's saw start, falter, start again, and settle into a varying, rhythmic whine that tells Martin the boy is limbing and bucking a tree he felled the day before. It is still too dark to see the trees clearly enough for felling, and, really, it is too dark for limbing and bucking, but Wes is a hard worker, and he hopes to get enough lead on the tractors to take a day off for hunting before the season ends.

Martin's hands, circulation impaired

by thirty years of heat, cold, and numbing vibration, are almost devoid of feeling as he sets his saw and fells by the base of the big yellow pine he has chosen as his first tree of the day. He ignores his hands and the insister ache in the leg that was crushed by a rolling log years before. He remembers a yellow-jacket nest near the base of the tree. He'd intended to douse the nest with gas the previous afternoon so that the wasps would leave by morning. It has been excavated during the night, as neatly as with a shovel, and Martin grins as he sees it and makes a mental note to tell his boy at lunch time that he has found a bear for him to hunt on their first day off.

The pine leans heavily uphill into the standing timber, its top a twenty foot spike of dead wood where lightning struck it. Martin first makes an undercut, chopping out a pie-shaped wedge of wood in the direction in

Stan Hager, a professional logger for thirteen years, is the author of a collection of short stories, Lunatics and Other Lovers reissued this year by Blue Oak Press in Newcastle, California.



hich he wants the tree to fall. He matches the undercut on the opposite side of the trunk with a single back-cut that will sever the tree from its stump. Finishing the final inch of is back cut, Martin runs quickly sideways as the tree shudders and begins its lunge to earth. The yellow pine slaps the other trees in its fall, stripping branches and bowing their trunks like giant catapults. As the brushed trees straighten, the air fills with a green haze of needles and heavy limbs, and the snag top comes floating down to tick into the ground by the fresh stump. Martin, safely behind a neighboring bole, hears and feels a "whump" as his son, a quarter-mile away, fells a tree.

"Big one," he thinks, "to be felt at his distance."

The rhythm, the working monotony of the day, takes over as he fells, limbs, and bucks tree after tree. Anything one long enough becomes routine, even the destruction of 200-foot-tall trees, and he works automatically, gauging the lean of trees, checking for signs of rot in their stumps, driving elastic wedges with his ax, dodging limbs and tops as they fly back toward him.

At nine o'clock Martin, stopping for his third tank of gas, cocks an ear in the direction of his son. There is no sound of the boy's saw.

"Gassing up," the man thinks as he returns to work.

There is still no sound of saw at his next filling, and he begins to worry. He mounts a stump and shouts in the direction of his son, but the gathering wind tears the sound from his mouth and shreds it almost as it leaves his lips. He begins walking toward his son, worried but unsure if he could hear the boy's saw in the rising wind.

Wesley is still alive. His skull is crushed like a hard-boiled egg dropped on a counter, and one leg is a mass of raw flesh where a broken limb gouged almost through it. His hands make twitching, crablike movements in the pine needles and red dirt where he lies. As nearly as could be determined, Wesley had undercut a small, rotten white fir and was preparing to fell it when he noticed a small pine that had been pushed over by a previously felled tree. Not wanting to cover the unbucked tree with the fir, he had taken the chance of working beneath the un-

dercut tree. Weak wood and a north wind drove the tree directly over him as Wesley, back turned and chain saw screaming, limbed the little pine. He died in his father's arms without regaining consciousness. Martin and his two brothers were back at work three days later.

THAT IS TIMBER FELLING. With a death rate of 12.5 per 1,000 workers per year and a basic compensation rate of \$20 paid in for every \$100 in wages, it is one of the most perilous occupations on earth. If professional football were as lethal, a fan could expect to see a tackle bleeding to death or a linebacker crushed to jelly about once every other Sunday. If you worked in an office with 500 people, and if your work were as hazardous, hardly a day would pass without one of your fellows being carried past your cubicle on a stretcher. Six or seven times a year you could anticipate stepping over the lifeless body of a co-worker on your way to the water cooler. I have never worked in an office, but I find it difficult to believe that carnage on this scale would be tolerated for long. As for football, since one player paralyzed during the course of a season provokes tsunamis of shock and concern among the fans and elicits grave opinions from sportswriters all over the country, it seems probable that if six or seven men were killed on the field in a year, enough angry voices would rise to abolish or change the sport.

In the logging woods a worse carnage is accepted as a matter of course. When I went back to work for Martin the spring following his son's death, we talked for twenty minutes before I said, "Sure too bad about Wes, Martin."

"Yes," he said, "sometimes it happens that way."

Almost two years have elapsed since the last time I lay on the white sheets of an emergency-room bed undergoing the ritual cleansing, debridement, and stitching required to treat a serious chain-saw wound—my third in fifteen years. One stares at the ceiling or walls or the bland face of the nurse or any place but the damaged area where the doctor is probing and snipping, removing wood chips and tattered flesh. Occasionally, one glances at the doc-

tor's face as if to judge from his expression the extent of one's ruin. Is the doctor skilled? Did he have enough sleep last night? Are any nerves cut? How long will I be off work? These thoughts skitter through the mind and are crowded out by the image of a saw, engine roaring, rebounding toward an unprotected leg.

Thirteen months ago I heard of the death of Wes Hedrick—the latest of my friends and acquaintances to be killed while felling timber. We had worked together the year before, and one noontime he kidded me about being fat. The next morning I put a handful of red ants into his lunchpail.

These two violent incidents, Wes's death and my arm injury, intrude upon my thoughts with a starkness that overshadows the canoe trips, book chats, and other quiet good times that have intervened.

I wonder: are the deaths and mangleings—my crippled left arm, Bob Sari's limp, John Cort's widow—in evitable, part of the sad but unavoidable tax levied by an industrial civilization? The answer is only a qualified yes. Timber felling is a fearsome business in which antlike workers manipulate giant vegetables, thirty or forty times their own height and weighing as much as half a million pounds, on treacherous ground and in all weather. The timber faller's chief tool, a chain saw, bears little resemblance to the toy one sees advertised on television, and is arguably the most dangerous appliance on earth to the man using it. My felling saw (a Stihl 090) has a fifteen-horsepower engine driving its heavy steel chain around a four-foot bar at the speed of 6,000 feet per minute. It will cut through a thirty-inch log in less than a minute and through an arm or leg in a split second.

When, in felling a tree or bucking a log, the tip of the bar strikes an unseen limb or a sapling, the machine kicks back with appalling speed and violence, directly at the operator. Perhaps an Olympic weight lifter could control a big saw kicking back; I can't, and I know men much stronger than I who can't either.

In addition to the saw and the menace of falling trees, there are a host of other hazards to threaten the timber faller, ranging from wasps to rattlesnakes, from rolling logs to heavy tractors operating on steep ground. It is

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IN THE LOGGING WORLD obvious that timber felling can never be as safe as, say, big-city police work, or high-rise construction. It could, however, be a great deal less dangerous than it is now.

There are two government organizations in California whose domains most frequently intersect those of the logger: the State Labor Commission and the office of Cal OSHA (California Occupational Safety and Health Administration). The State Labor Commission settles most disputes arising between employer and worker, and is granted the authority to determine the amount of compensation awarded to an injured worker. Nicholas von Hoffman suggests, in *Make-Believe Presidents*, that workmen's compensation laws were drafted primarily on behalf of industry, in response to judicial decisions that established the right of workers to sue for accidents resulting from unsafe working conditions. That is, they had their genesis in a perceived need for industry to indemnify itself against the claims of workers. This origin is perhaps reflected in the fact that benefits paid out, however welcome they may be to the disabled worker, are still rather paltry compared with awards from private sources for similarly severe injuries of non-industrial origin. For example, my own worst injury to date was a twelve-inch-long, bone-deep gash that severed the biceps, tendons, and median nerves of my left arm, leaving me with a rated 47 percent permanent disability in this limb and necessitating a three-and-a-half-year layoff while the nerves regenerated and the biceps stretched back into usable shape. The injury netted me a total of \$12,615 in disability payments and \$7,000 or \$8,000 in medical, surgical, and rehabilitation payments. A compensation for death now pays about \$50,000, not a great deal these days. My several dealings with the state authority show it to be fair and moderately efficient—but certainly not generous.

Cal OSHA has a mandate fully as large as its title suggests. It is responsible for the safety of all but a relative handful of California workers. At present, this prodigious task seems a bit too much for the staff. Cal OSHA has, since its inception in 1973, suffered persistent criticism from both industry and journalists. Some of the opprobrium is deserved, some is un-

fair, and much of it seems motivated by the industry's calculated wish to discredit the organization. For a number of reasons it is difficult to assess accurately whether OSHA has had any salutary effect on logging. Recent data are almost impossible to obtain—at least from Cal OSHA itself. In fact, the statistics cited here are derived from published insurance rates, and from a variety of publications issued by the California Division of Labor Statistics, in particular one grisly but informative pamphlet entitled *Work Injuries in Logging, California 1970*. Apparently OSHA must rely on these sources as well. One difficulty with such figures is that many are derived from data submitted by the woodworking industry. Another is that they are so long out of date.

As in most cases where the bulk of hard information is issued by the industry itself, there are some discrepancies and elisions in logging-injury statistics that reflect either sloppy bookkeeping or a deliberate attempt to disguise embarrassing data. For example, none of the civil servants at the Division of Labor Statistics seems to know the organization of the woodworking industry, and clearly the industry is not eager to enlighten them. I will quote a few sentences from the introduction to *Work Injuries in Logging, California*:

Very diverse activities are included within the lumber and wood products industry, ranging from work in the woods to the fabrication of wooden ladders. . . . It is obvious that some activities are more hazardous than others. . . . As the bulk of the logging operations in California are [sic] carried on by companies that operate sawmills as well, a work injury rate is not available for logging activities separately from sawmill operation.

To a person with any background in lumbering at all, this disclaimer is patently absurd. The two activities in woodworking—logging and milling—are as separate and distinct as, say, iron-ore mining and steel production when these take place on opposite sides of Lake Superior. There is virtually no crossover. A worker does not operate a planer in the mill one day and the next drive a hundred miles into the woods to fell trees. My best guess is that the California lumber industry is

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well aware of the appallingly hazardous nature of West Coast logging, and is at some pains to bury this information by averaging it with statistics from other, safer activities. One must wonder at OSHA's credulity and lack of curiosity, however, since logging is one of five industries first targeted for special attention.

Whatever its origin, this confusion in the state's data for 1970 and the absence of any more recent and precise figures for injuries and deaths send one back to the insurance companies to discover whether logging casualties have declined as a result of OSHA's accident-prevention programs. As nearly as I can tell, the insurance rates on timber felling, after climbing for several years, have leveled off at around \$20 and have stayed there for the most part since 1975. At least as far as the actuaries are concerned, circumstances have not improved measurably since the arrival of OSHA. Two fundamental weaknesses in the OSHA program must account for its failure: enforcement, which I shall discuss later, and the standards—the specific safety rules governing logging.

A CHRONIC, often-cited problem with the directives of Cal OSHA is a class of regulations that are usually referred to by OSHA workers themselves as "the cracked toilet seat syndrome," after a rule (largely ignored now) that proscribed the use of cracked toilet seats by workers, for hygienic reasons. The effect of the multitude of similarly stupid or unenforceable regulations imposed by OSHA is to vitiate and obscure the rather small number that do make sense and should be implemented.

A single example of an unenforceable order will serve: "6286 (a) Undercuts shall be of a size to safely guide the trees and minimize the possibility of splitting."

This is a very useful rule but absolutely impossible to observe, except after the fact. After an improperly undercut tree has toppled sideways and crushed a cat skinner on his tractor or barberchained (split because of a heavy lean and insufficient undercut) and wiped out the man felling it, a trained OSHA employee arriving on the spot *might* be able to make a case for vio-

lation of this rule. But I seriously doubt that a court would go on to convict the logger or the company under most circumstances. A rule like this is virtually useless, since the only one capable of judging the efficacy of his undercut is the man felling the tree. Either he knows his business or he doesn't. If he doesn't, it is likely that either he or someone within a tree-length will pay some heavy dues.

At least the undercutting regulation is reasonable. The following regulation is not: "6292 (1) (4) Fuel saw only in conditions not conducive to fire hazards."

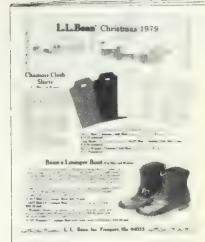
Briefly: there *are* no such conditions in a logging area, unless one were to carry his saw half a mile or so to the nearest road eight or ten times a day for fueling. Timber fallers are paid by what they cut. Since few loggers take any breaks at all, or more than twenty minutes for lunch, they simply rebel at the loss of time and energy these trips would involve.

Finally, there are regulations that should exist and do not. For three years, the large California logging concerns and their spokesmen, such as Associated California Loggers, have blocked an attempt to force all men handling a saw in the woods to wear fiber-glass chaps. These leggings have been required for all state and federal workers who handle chain saws for at least ten years. *Work Injuries in Logging*, California states that in 1970, 103 injuries sustained by fallers—38 percent of the total—involved the lower extremities. The vast majority of these were saw cuts from kickbacks, and most of these would have been prevented by this one piece of safety apparel. The logging concerns fear that outfitting their men with these chaps will reduce productivity. Gary Robeson, a dedicated and conscientious enforcement officer for OSHA in Redding, California, has persuaded a couple of large lumber firms to try them on a voluntary basis. The effect has been a striking reduction in leg injuries and no apparent decline in productivity.

An even more glaring regulatory omission affects the manufacturers of chain saws. Saw cuts resulting from kickbacks accounted for one-eighth of all logging (not just felling) injuries in 1970. In addition, saw kickbacks nationwide, including logging, farm-

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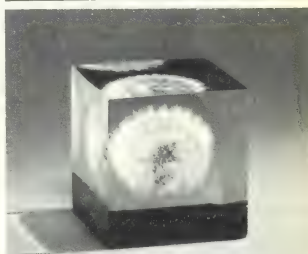
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ing, woodcutting, and weekend use—produced an astounding 52,000 injuries and deaths. The highly publicized accidents that resulted from the faulty Pinto automobile and the Firestone 500 tire pale when compared with this figure. Most kickback injuries would have been less serious or prevented with the addition to the saw of a simple, lightweight, inexpensive device that has been on the market for years. The automatic chainbrake stops the chain immediately when the operator's left hand slips or is dislodged from the handle of the saw. This feature is available on some saws that weigh less than ten pounds and cost less than \$150. It should be required on every chain saw sold in the country. If one large state mandated this device as a requirement for marketing chain saws within its borders, it would soon be impossible to buy a saw anywhere in the country without it.

ATTENDING to the public complaints of U.S. business, one might think that commerce is so hampered by regulations and by the rulebook automatons enforcing them that it is virtually impossible to pull a toaster off the assembly line without bumping into five government employees on hand to inspect it. But at Cal OSHA, at least, there is a severe shortage of employees to enforce the rules. Two men at the Redding office are responsible for an area larger than New York State, a region comprising five counties, all with substantial logging activity and high accident rates.

The logging itself takes place at hundreds of scattered and inaccessible sites—most of them several hours' drive from the main office. Unless two companies happen to be working near each other, it is usually an all-day job for an inspector to visit just one logging site (unannounced). Even then, he will probably be unable to inspect the whole sprawling operation. This is one reason why OSHA has had so little impact on logging. Another reason is simple ignorance. I could find no one in the Sacramento regional office who knew anything about logging at all. When I first appeared at the OSHA consultation office, in the guise of a felling contractor soliciting help in

forming a safety program for my men, the consultant assigned to me did not understand the term *buck* as applied to cutting a tree into logs. This, in spite of the fact that the words *buck*, *bucker*, and *bucking* appear five times in the page and a half of orders specifically covering timber fallers.

OSHA faces an additional difficulty that relates directly to the character of lumberjacks themselves. Two OSHA workers I talked with have characterized the nature of timber fallers as "macho." I think "proud fatalism" would be a more apt term for the attitudes these men bring to their work. They are rugged, skilled men, most of them itinerant and non-union, receiving large wages of \$150 to \$200 a day in exchange for work that is fully understood by fewer than 1,000 men in the state of California. Many of the men working in logging can do any job in the woods—except felling.

An apprenticeship of at least three to five years is requisite background for timber felling, and most men who attempt it find that they are physically or temperamentally unsuited to the task; in addition to being dangerous, log cutting is extremely hard work. A man felling a large tree can (and should) peremptorily order the removal of any individual or machine from the affected area. When he does so, no one argues with or second-guesses him. Such a worker reacts poorly to an upbraiding from a fuzzy-cheeked safety inspector with limited knowledge of the forest.

Unfortunately, the logger's resistance to the rules is usually rewarded by the boss, who is worried less about the expense of an accident to the company than about turning out the lumber. A number of OSHA's regulations that would reduce logging injuries significantly and immediately can be enforced only by the logging companies, which must first see that it is in their interest to do so. One simply states that, "While felling, fallers shall be so located that they will not endanger other employees." The importance of this order is apparent if one considers the thirty-six fatalities occasioned by falling trees or snags during the period 1966–72. Nine of these deaths are listed as having been caused by a tree being felled on someone other than the timber faller himself: someone working too close to the man felling.

The act of felling is dependent on such variables as the lean of the tree, the presence of rot in the stump (rot weakens the hinge of wood that is the only means of aiming and controlling the descent of the tree), sudden winds that can blow a tree back against the lean, the presence of weak, dead wood in the trunk, which can cause the tree to break into pieces as it falls, and above all, the skill, greed, and weariness of the man doing the job.

In spite of these hazards, and in spite of the rule, it has been the practice on every job I have ever worked in California to employ men within a tree-length of trees being felled. For example, four years ago I was a felling boss for Robinson Timber of Grass Valley. The trees were very large. The felling area was in a poorly drained valley between two high ridges. The same moist, rich soil that promoted tree growth caused the trees to be so shallow-rooted that several times a day a large tree would topple one or more of its companions in the course of its fall.

On a typical day I might have, a hundred feet away from me, two of my own buckers cutting up trees I had felled, a choker-setter putting cables on the logs—often as soon as they were bucked—and a cat skinner driving back and forth, hauling the logs close to or even across the direction in which I was felling. In addition, a public-access road ran almost through the center of one brushy stand of timber no greater than forty or fifty acres in total area. (I can report, somewhat wryly, that my only felling casualty there was my own pickup, which I had parked on the access road and promptly totaled with a tree pushed over by another tree.)

These are insane conditions. When I finally tired of working in constant fear of killing one of my own men (my father and a close friend were among those with me) or one of the rigging crew, and complained to the company foreman, he laughed. "Hell, if we don't stay on your ass, you bastards won't get anything done," he said, or words very much to that effect. I was making good money, so I did not complain further. It is interesting that this same company, cutting in the same place the year before, had had a bucker cut squarely in half when a tree fell across the man's back and

he log he was leaning over. The timber faller had apparently lost track of his worker's location in the thick undergrowth.

That such negligence continues to be tolerated and even encouraged was demonstrated to me early last July. On a job near Donner Summit, I found myself felling trees within killing distance of a landing crew (two or three "knot bumpers" trimming logs and passing them on to a loader operator), various trucks and drivers, and two tractors running back and forth unpredictably. It is chilling to contemplate the fact that it was my third day on the job, and none of the men trusting their lives to my skill and judgment had any knowledge of my competence.

SAFETY STANDARDS at present are the awkward child of an uneasy union between OSHA workers, who would like to eliminate every last pinched finger and stubbed toe, and "industry leaders" who want to be left alone to make money. The best way to derive standards would be to examine past injuries, heavily weighting the factors of cause, severity, and specific task at the time of injury, in order to predict future accidents. In timber felling, these would comprise, chiefly, such contingencies as men working too close to timber fallers, men working alone (a common though illegal procedure that may have helped to kill Wes Hedrick), and the absence of a chainbrake on chain saws. Once the major causes of death and injury are isolated, appropriate rules governing these hazards should be drafted and rigorously enforced. Since OSHA workers cannot be ubiquitous, they should be selective and severe. In spite of carping by industry, "serious" violations (those requiring a heavy fine or, upon recurrence, imprisonment) are rarely cited; instead, the OSHA office usually issues a "general" citation, which is no more than a warning.

Workers generally, and loggers especially, should be better acquainted with OSHA and should come to view it in the same light as they now do the State Compensation Board and the Labor Commission: a forum where their complaints will be heard fairly and impartially. Workers would be

friendlier to OSHA if the regulations were revised and simplified, since, as things stand, virtually everything a timber faller does violates some regulation.

Finally, the industries involved should be made to see that safety is in their own economic interest. Insurance rates are based on an "experience rating," which is derived from the actual occurrence of injuries per work force for a given company. The fewer injuries per man-hour worked, the lower the insurance rate. At \$200 a day, I was costing my last employer \$40 in compensation for every eight hours I worked. A good experience rating could have lowered this by as much as 40 percent—saving \$16 a day for myself alone. Clearly, larger companies could save money by employing one full-time safety inspector for every fifty workers. The inspector might issue warnings on the first offense, a one-day layoff on the second, and dismissal on the third—or whatever other penalties seemed appropriate. No doubt some loggers would sue if thus penalized, but Georgia Pacific, Fibreboard, et alia surely command the legal talent to overrule their employees.

At present, for example, men can and do get the pink slip for smoking a cigarette in an area of presumed fire danger. Since, on an average, every accident costs the employer five times its apparent dollar amount (compensation paid plus medical expenses), such a program properly administered would save money as well as lives.

Given the astounding range of valid apprehensions available to the modern worrier—nuclear leakage, omnipresent carcinogens, fuel shortages—no one, I suppose, is going to be unduly concerned about the deaths and maimings of a relative handful of lumberjacks each year. On an absolute scale, about as many people die annually in this country from insect stings as are killed while felling timber.

Still, timber felling presents in exaggerated form lapses in worker safety, government regulation, and the practices and attitudes of industry—both willful and unintended—that are common to all occupations. If a safety program can be devised that works for loggers, it can probably be modified to work almost anywhere. ☐

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FOOLING WITH THE BUDGET

How Congress causes inflation

by Tom Bethell

The state is that great engine by which everyone seeks to live at the expense of everyone else.
—Frédéric Bastiat

ON APRIL 23, in the course of a debate in the United States Senate, Sen. William Proxmire of Wisconsin introduced an amendment to balance the federal budget. His plan was simple—to cut federal spending by the amount of the anticipated deficit, namely \$29 billion. He made an interesting speech in favor of his proposal, ending at one point:

Who comes to Washington to ask us to cut a particular program? You will wait a long time for an answer. Who comes? No one. Not ever. But hundreds come purporting to represent millions, asking us to increase spending for programs. Businessmen who come here from our states are never asking us to cut a particular program but asking for spending for defense contracts or home-building or public-works programs. Farmers never ride their tractors pleading for cutting anything. They come here asking for more price supports. Labor unions represent workers who suffer severely from inflation and government waste. But like business they come here to ask us to increase government spending. Governors and mayors often make great fiscal responsibility speeches and blame the squandermania of the federal government, but when they come here it is always, and I mean always, for more spending for them.

For years, in other words, all sectors of

society have been petitioning Congress for relief from their pressing financial needs. And Congress, which saw itself at first in the role of servant—the elected servant of the people—duly paid out as much money as it was able to scrounge from the taxpayers. At first this worked well, and it seemed as though it would work forever. Farmers demanded subsidies to protect them from the rigors of free-market price movements. Businessmen persuaded Congress that it was better to bail out a large corporation than to allow any increase in unemployment, however temporary that increase might prove to be.

As long as the economy was growing sufficiently, this passing around of money from taxpayers to tax recipients seemed to be a satisfactory way for Congress to do business. Everyone seemed to be living at everyone else's expense, and hardly anyone worried or even noticed that an increasing percentage of this money was coming straight off the printing press—money with no commensurate wealth to back it up.

Slowly it became apparent to more and more people that there was a problem with this method, an increasing sluggishness. The economy was becoming alarmingly politicized. The government's share of the nation's income grew slowly but steadily. The federal budget—in deficit for nineteen of the past twenty years—reached a half-trillion dollars. Inflation proved intractable. And, so it seemed, one day we woke up (with a hangover) and our duly elected representative in Washington was no



Tom Bethell is a Washington editor of Harper's.

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longer our servant. He was behaving as if he owned the manse.

It was in response to this transformation that the balance-the-budget movement slowly began to develop momentum. People saw that it no longer did any good to go to Washington with hands outstretched. That was how the problem began, after all. They gave you money, most of the time, but it was more and more frankly *paper* money, of declining value, and usually it had strings attached, too (environmental-impact statements, affirmative-action plans, forms to fill out).

By early 1979, then, it was Washington's turn to awaken with a start. Thirty states petitioned Congress for a constitutional convention that would mandate a balanced budget. This was impudence, it was generally agreed in the Capital, but it was nevertheless preferable to the earlier, related attack on Washington, the tax-cut movement of 1978. The proposals to cut the federal income tax offered by Sen. William V. Roth, Jr. (R-Del.), Rep. Jack Kemp (R-N.Y.), Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), and others had been beaten back, but they had made for some uncomfortable moments.

The Washington policy makers and Congressional leaders could at least see in the balanced-budget drive some relief from pressure. Not that they liked it. But the nice thing about a balanced budget (as the citizenry did not seem to realize) was that there were two very different ways of balancing it. You could cut spending (as Proxmire would try to do) or . . . when you thought about it . . . you could raise taxes.

The principal villain

YOU MIGHT REPLY, They would not dare do a thing like that, would they? Increase taxes, so soon after Proposition 13? But if you think that, you haven't grasped Washington's cunningly devised fiscal machinery. The point is that the legislators in Washington don't have to perform the most unpopular task facing legislators elsewhere: namely, vote for tax increases. Taxes are steadily increasing all the time, thanks to the combination of inflation and the "progressive" tax code. This is a valued mechanism, because it is very nearly invisible. (On the other side, the taxpayers are becoming more and more restless because they can't quite see what is actually happening to them.)

When you get a cost-of-living pay increase (as a result of which your financial position

remains the same) you are simultaneously shifted into a higher tax bracket—one in which you must send a higher *percentage* of your earnings to Washington. In this way, the amount of money that Washington has exacted of taxpayers in the past decade has grown astronomically (see Table 1). Bear in mind when looking at these figures that they have grown without Congress's having voted a single income-tax increase. The last year federal income-tax rates were increased was 1952. (Table 2 shows how low and high marginal tax rates have fluctuated because of legislated changes since World War II.)

In the late 1960s there was a Vietnam war surtax of 10 percent, but that was phased out after two years; and there have been occasional increases in Social Security taxes—particularly last year's increase, the major impact of which won't be felt until January, 1981. Otherwise, there have been no increases in the tax rates. In fact, there have been tax cuts, most recently in 1978, when the Congress voted at the last minute a "package" of decreases including the Steiger Amendment to lower the capital-gains tax.

Therefore, although the schedule of tax rates is actually lower than it was in 1962, the average person has been pushed up higher into

TABLE 1

U.S. Budget: 1970-1980 est. (in billions of dollars)

	REVENUES	OUTLAYS	DEFICIT	FEDERAL DEBT
1970	194	197	3	383
1971	188	211	23	410
1972	209	232	23	437
1973	232	247	15	468
1974	265	270	5	486
1975	281	326	45	544
1976	300	366	66	632
1977	358	403	45	709
1978	402	451	49	780
1979	461	494	33	830
1980	509	532	23	887

SOURCE: Office of Management and Budget

TABLE 2

U.S. Income Tax Structure: Legislated Changes in Low and High Marginal Tax Rates Since World War II (by percentage)

	LOW	HIGH
WWII	23	94
1945	19	86
1948	16	82
1950	17	84
1951	20	91
1952	22	92
1954	20	91
1964	16	77
1965	14	70

SOURCE: U.S. Treasury Department

the schedule by inflation and consequently is fixed at higher rates. Inflation, then, is the great anonymous tax collector. That is the beauty of the system.

Consider for a moment the following figures from a Library of Congress study. They show how rapidly we are being moved up into higher tax brackets by inflation. Between 1965 and 1975, the number of people in the 20-percent tax bracket rose from 19 percent of the population to 53 percent. The proportion of the population in the 25-percent bracket increased from 7 to 29 percent of the population. In other words, many more of us are being treated by the Internal Revenue Service as well-to-do, or moderately so, even when all we are doing is keeping abreast of inflated prices.

Many voters are understandably befuddled by this invisible tax-escalator, which seems to operate independently of any legislator. The frustrated taxpayers would like to get even with the elected representative responsible for the design and smooth functioning of this evilish machinery, but they can't find him. All they know is that *their* man in Washington occasionally votes for a modest tax *cut*. The resulting frustration of the population at large has been the principal driving force behind the balance-the-budget movement.

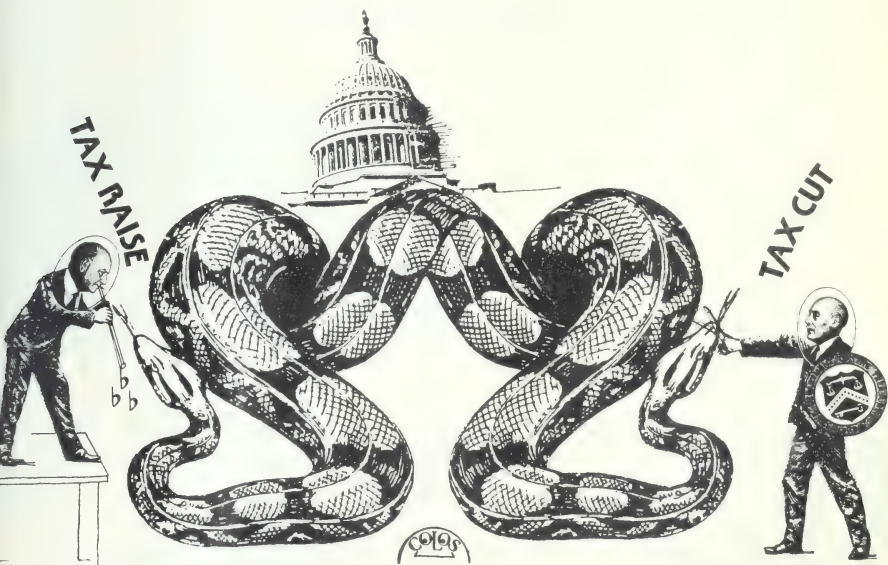
A good many Congressmen and Senators have long since calculated that they are not threatened by any of these taxpayer revolts, however, because the recipients of federal money in their districts are grateful to them in particular, while taxpayers in their districts merely experience a generalized frustration at "the system."

"... many more of us are being treated by the Internal Revenue Service as well-to-do ..."

SO THE PRINCIPAL VILLAIN is inflation. Without it, legislators would have to vote for tax increases. It is clear, then, that inflation is the quiet ally of big-spending legislators. Do they cause it? What is the connection between budget deficits and inflation?

When a deficit is incurred, the U.S. Treasury doesn't simply default on its debts. It borrows money from the private sector, from individual savers, in effect selling them pieces of paper called "bonds" in return for dollars. In the past four years the government has borrowed more than \$200 billion, which, according to Harvard economist Martin Feldstein, is about 40 percent of total private savings.

The government thus swills from the pond of private capital, and the immediate effect is to make it more expensive for people who want to borrow money to do useful things such



Tom Bethell
FOOLING
WITH THE
BUDGET

as build factories and houses. In short, the heavy government borrowing drives up interest rates. (One of the reasons the federal budget is so large these days is that almost 11 percent of it, \$56 billion, or ten times the amount spent on science, space, and technology, is required to make the interest payments to private-sector lenders.)

The increased interest rates promptly make life difficult for others in the economy who also want to borrow money, whether to start businesses or buy homes. At this point the Federal Reserve Bank comes under "pressure" (although its appointees are supposedly immune from direct political influence, inasmuch as they are not running for office and cannot be fired by the President before their terms expire) to reduce the interest rate. And here is where the truly inflationary act takes place: the Federal Reserve responds to pressure by buying back the pieces of paper called "bonds" — repurchasing them with freshly minted dollar bills. This new money enlarges the available quantity of capital, back to something like its former level, and down go interest rates again.

One could say, then, that federal budget deficits are not in themselves inflationary, provided the economy is prepared to swallow high interest rates. But if one concedes that high interest rates are intolerable, then deficit spending is by far the most important cause of the expansion of the money supply, which in turn translates into generally higher price levels a year or two later.

One of the great scandals of recent and current government rhetoric is that there has been a concerted attempt by the economic leadership to deny that budget deficits lead to inflation (or play anything more than a minimal role in inflation). The government consistently tries to maintain that *price increases* are the cause of inflation. This is like saying that meals cause hunger.

A little demagoguery here goes a long way, of course. The public can easily see and get annoyed at the price increases at the grocery store; however, the chicanery in Washington aimed at giving politicians large amounts of money to hand out to their constituents, and the complex way of paying off the debt thus incurred, cannot readily be observed. Similarly, the "wage and price controls" approach to inflation is mischief analogous to trying to prevent the expansion of a balloon into which air is being pumped by putting the balloon into a box and shutting the lid.

The only way to stop inflating the balloon is to stop pumping it up. But that is a course the politicians and those other functionaries

who make up Official Washington do not want to take. They could do that by abolishing deficits. But they won't. The reason they won't, when all is said and done, is that they enjoy spending other people's money. It gives them a sense of power—it gives them power.

A transfer of power

BEFORE JOINING the Senators in their deliberations, we must first go back a few years, to 1974, when the new Budget and Impoundment Control Act was passed by huge margins in both House and Senate. The vote in the Senate was 88-0. When votes are unanimous, something devilishly tricky has almost certainly escaped notice. Such was true of the Budget Act.

The idea behind the legislation was to reorganize and (as was said) to "rationalize" the "budget process." Whatever that might mean, it seemed like a good idea at the time. The budget then was increasingly going into the red, although by far smaller amounts than would later be the case; and it was argued that the problem was as follows: hitherto, legislators had appropriated money in the different spending categories (defense, health, transportation, et cetera) separately. There was no one controlling hand, no preliminary overview, whereby the Congressmen and Senators could determine exactly how much money they had at their disposal to spend; and so, in their individual enthusiasms for different spending programs, they would be found collectively to have spent more than they had taken in. The result was always attributed to inadvertence, an excess of enthusiasm, or compassion.

With the "budget process" reorganized in 1974, this would not happen again, it was said. The word *reform* appeared in a *New York Times* headline. Hosannas filled the air. *Fortune* magazine saw a "Noble Experiment" in budgeting. The new Budget Act involved the creation of two new committees on Capitol Hill, a Senate Budget Committee and a House Budget Committee, and a brand new organization called the Congressional Budget Office, which would provide "analyses of alternative fiscal, budgetary, and programmatic policies." In other words, the CBO would advise the Budget Committees that spending so-much on defense would decrease unemployment by X percent, increase inflation by Y percent. The CBO, once it was launched in 1975, would provide employment for 219 people, mostly economists, a good many of them fresh out of college and eager to put the world right.

In light of the CBO's analyses, the budget

committees would then set the overall totals in the various budget categories, fully aware of how much these totals would add up to, and, on the other side of the equation, of how much tax revenues were expected to amount to.

For example, the Senate Budget Committee might decide that \$10 billion would be spent next year on natural resources and environment. Then, later on, the Appropriations Committee would meet and agree that, say, \$30 million of this would be spent on a dam in Montana. (Incidentally, that explains why it is politically desirable to be on the Appropriations Committee; the Budget Committee by contrast has very little political appeal. One cannot "deliver" an aerospace contract or aclamation project to one's district; one merely delivers to the nation as a whole.)

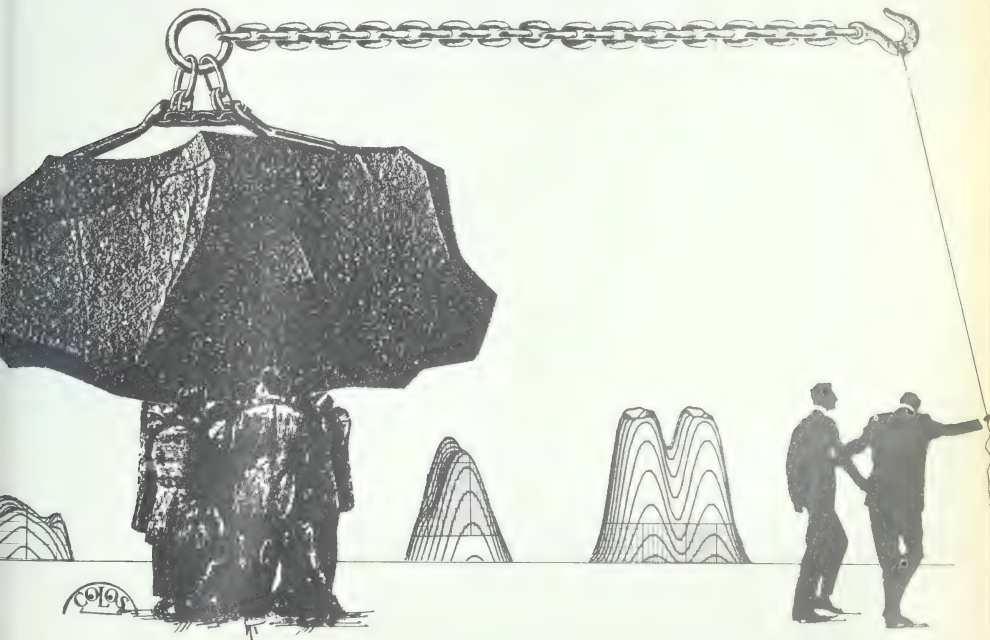
One of the main reasons the CBO and the two Budget Committees were established was to transfer power away from the Executive branch, just one element in the great shift of power away from the White House that has gone on all through the 1970s. Congress could now do its own budgets without relying on the figures furnished by the Executive. President Nixon provided the main impetus for this when he appointed a man to head the Office of Economic Opportunity and told him ex-

plicitly not to spend the moneys appropriated by Congress for its poverty programs. This attempt at "impoundment," a direct challenge to Congress, provoked many a howl and assured the new Budget Act easy passage through Congress.

Both conservatives and liberals were eager to vote for the act because, in the first place, conservatives believed that the liberals were going to feel uncomfortable voting for explicit budget deficits, as they now would have to do for the first time, with the Budget Committees and the CBO *in situ*. They thought this would embarrass the liberals. But the liberals thought differently. They knew that they *indeed* would go on voting for budget deficits, and that hardly any of their constituents would object. As they foresaw it, correctly, the CBO would come to their rescue by developing "scientific" rationales for spending just as much money as they wanted to spend; and this in turn would be more money than last year, no matter what phase the economy might be in. In a recent issue of *Policy Report*, Paul Craig Roberts explained the kind of thinking that could be expected from the CBO as follows:

Recessions justify deficits to get the economy moving again; recoveries justify deficits to keep the recoveries going; good times justify deficits to ward off the down-

"The only way to stop inflating the balloon is to stop pumping it up."



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turn that is predicted to be around the corner. Signs can be found upon which to predict a recession.

And that is the way it has turned out, five years later. Almost the only one who saw it coming was Rep. Joe Waggoner (D-La.), who said during the debate on the bill on December 5, 1973:

I am constrained to say that this is not going to do anything to make this body responsible, in my personal opinion, because we are not controlling expenditures. We will be using all the devices we use now to keep spending. I hope I am wrong, and that there will be some restraint in the Congress... but I cannot help believing... that we are going to do anything but go ahead and just keep increasing spending and the debt ceiling... This Congress does not have the courage to balance expenditures with revenues. That is our problem now.

Waggoner was dismissed as one of those country bumpkins, but he was correct.

The Keynesian model

THE DIRECTOR of the Congressional Budget Office is Alice Rivlin—who was appointed to the post in February, 1975, with the backing of such members of Congress as Sen. Edmund Muskie (D-Maine). By this time Muskie was the chairman of the newly created Senate Budget Committee. He had lobbied hard and given up his seat on the Foreign Relations Committee to get the job.

The *New York Times*, at the time of her appointment, noted that Alice Rivlin's "intellectual credentials are outstanding." Be that as it may, income redistribution was her political and economic philosophy in a nutshell, picked up somewhere along the line between Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe (Ph.D. in economics), the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (where she was an Assistant Secretary in the Johnson years), and the Brookings Institution, where she became a senior fellow.

As the new Congressional budget procedure came closer to enactment in 1974 and it became apparent that Congress would soon be looking for someone to direct the CBO, Rivlin was fortunately able to promote her cause in that expedient Washington way, by writing several quite lengthy articles for the *Washington Post* op-ed page. In this forum she could keep her name before Congressional leaders and, at the same time, establish her credentials as a reliable proponent of spending.

In October, 1974, for example, following a speech by President Ford on economic policy, Rivlin sadly noted that:

All strong measures were rejected. The President called for neither gasoline rationing nor a stiffer gasoline tax... He condemned wage and price controls, even asserting, contrary to evidence, that controls were ineffective in World War II.

She recommended that the tax burden be further shifted "from lower to higher income groups."

In short, she made no bones about her political philosophy. But when she was appointed to head the CBO not long after this (she consulted with John W. Gardner, the founder of Common Cause, before taking the job), she was asked by a *New York Times* reporter what she thought of President Ford's budget.

"I can't think of a worse question to start off with," she replied. The CBO, she added, was meant to be "nonpartisan... My personal reactions to the President's budget are therefore irrelevant."

Then she went underground, in a manner of speaking, in her new and important job, even though her office was on the fourth floor of the House Office Building Annex No. 2. On the sixth floor they had the computers where the figures could be "massaged" (that's what the man on the sixth floor said they did to the figures). It wouldn't take her long to work out how to dress up her personal reactions as differential equations, feed them into the computers, and triumphantly display them to any doubting Senators or Congressmen on Capitol Hill. ("You are against full employment, Senator? See what the latest technology has to show us.") That's what econometric modeling is for, after all.

THE ECONOMIC "model" (favorite word of up-to-date economists) within which the CBO, and Congress itself, operates is essentially Keynesian in character. This may sound complicated, but it is really simple. John Maynard Keynes, Cambridge economist and Bloomsbury figure, published *The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money* in 1936, and his basic idea was that it is perfectly all right to stimulate the economy by government spending on public works programs. This might result in a budget deficit, but it would put people back to work, put money in their pockets, and thus create a demand for goods that would then be met by supply. In short, demand creates supply.

Keynes's theory was well attuned to an economy recently plunged into depression. His theory worked, and did not lead to inflation, because the money supply had previously been held down tight. Second, there was considerable "excess capacity" in the economy. That is, there were unemployed resources that could be put to work without having to pay higher prices to bid them away from other uses. In addition, taxes were low (because nominal incomes were low) and Washington's regulatory police force barely existed. All the conditions for a renewed burst of productivity existed.

Under these circumstances, the prescription "Stimulate demand!" was a sensible one. Moreover, Keynes, who was himself a fiscal conservative by today's standards, recommended that the budget deficits incurred by public-works spending should be balanced by budget surpluses once the economy was on the move again.

In retrospect, however, we can see that this theory led directly to today's problem. A government that finds it can spend its way out of economic depression has tasted a potent drug indeed, and one that suits only too well the tastes of politicians. As a result the remedy has proven impossible to discard, even though we now live in a very different time.

Now the factories are at full capacity (which

means that in order to build new ones money must be invested, and, before that, saved), unemployment is relatively low, regulators are marching about the land in search of people who might be making things without their permission, taxes are getting higher and higher, and the prestige of businessmen is dismal.

In short, the *supply* side of the economy, and of economic theory, has fallen into terrible disrepair. If you think about inflation for a moment ("too much money chasing too few goods"), you see that there are two obvious ways of fighting it: reduce the amount of money, or increase the number of goods. The obvious remedy for the current "stagflation" is for a government policy that will stimulate supply. Economic conditions are not merely different from those of Keynes's day: the two are practically the reciprocals of each other. Therefore a new theory is needed, as bold as Keynes's seemed at the time.

Such a theory is at hand, and it assumes that tax cuts, by encouraging people to work harder, would stimulate the economy, create new jobs, and, paradoxically, broaden rather than shrink the tax base. Therefore, inflationary budget deficits would not result any more than they did when government spending was increased in the 1930s.

"... the *supply* side of the economy, and of economic theory, has fallen into terrible disrepair."



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Keynes wanted to stimulate demand by allowing the government to spend money it didn't yet have; Roth, Kemp, and others now recommend that we stimulate supply by giving people the incentive to make more things. Although this initially entails keeping money out of the reach of politicians, the politicians would end up with more money at their disposal.

Despite the likely outcome, the idea of tax cuts tends to be very unpopular in Official Washington, which puts at the very mention of the words. Did someone say "tax cuts"? There are several hundred people in Washington whose job it is to rush forth with explanations why this is not a good idea. Inflation will balloon, employment drop, deficits soar, the economy stagnate, and so on.

When tax cuts were enacted in 1964 and 1965 (see Table 2), the Treasury Department estimated that they would result in a revenue loss of \$89 billion over six years. In fact, there was a \$54-billion revenue increase.

The main reason tax cuts are not considered to be particularly stimulative, in the reigning economic dogma of Washington, is that the incentive effects of allowing people to keep more of the money they earn are deemed not to exist. They are therefore not "factored in" to the models; that is, they are not included among the assumptions that are computed by the government's computers. Alice Rivlin has even suggested that people are likely to work less hard after a tax cut, because they will be able to earn the same amount of money in a shorter time. The contrary assumptions ought to be tested.

However, even if an incentive effect were conceded, heresy though that would be, no one would quite know what the exact "coefficients" for the variables would be, and so they would remain beyond reach of mathematics and therefore not allowed for in the CBO's economic forecasting. None of the econometric models used by the CBO takes into account the incentive effect of tax cuts. This again reflects Keynesian thinking, which considers only the demand side of the economy; supply factors are neglected as a matter of course.

Tax cuts are, in any event, less appealing politically than spending increases, because government spending promises quick symptomatic relief to economic problems, comparable to a junkie's fix. By contrast, giving people the incentive to work harder and thus ultimately stimulating supply is the equivalent of withdrawal from addiction. It takes time and is painful. The new factories don't get built for a while. Also, politicians lose influence.

In the all-encompassing environment of gov-

ernment, with high taxes, controls, regulations, and so on, the politician becomes an important figure. A politicized economy, such as we increasingly have, does much for the politician. He is empowered—and needed—to allocate, ration, administer, to hand out coupons to this group, permits to that, federal dollars to the other.

In a politically controlled economy, Paul Craig Roberts has written, "a person's relations with government become more important to his success than his market performance. . . . As people find it more difficult to save, they become more dependent on transfer payments and they lose their financial independence.

"In short," Roberts concluded, in a somber note that at first sounds vaguely paranoid but plausible, "government hasn't much to gain from a stable, growing economy. In such an economy, there is no need for all the government programs and controls that inflation and unemployment justify. When people are enjoying widespread individual success they don't need the government."

Economic assumptions

IN A POLITICIZED ECONOMY, the Congressional Budget Office under Alice Rivlin's command has played its intended role, reliably providing the House and Senate Budget Committees with good excuses for spending.

The CBO issues reports and analyses, which "usually take the form of published studies comparing present policies and programs with alternative approaches," according to a CBO brochure. Everywhere you turn in the CBO literature, you will see it affirmed that "the office does not make recommendations in matters of policy." Its job is to "present the Congress with options for consideration." A White House aide does not make recommendation when he presents, as three options to the President: 1) Bomb Moscow; 2) Surrender; 3) Spend \$98.5 billion on defense.

In a less extreme form, that is how the CBO presents options to Congress. In addition, the dollar amounts they present for consideration are skewed in the direction of greater spending. "They might present four options," says an aide who has worked on the staff of the Senate Budget Committee. "One will analyze the effects of a \$10-billion cut, one consider 'current policy,' the remaining two a \$10 billion and a \$20-billion increase in spending respectively. The two extremes—the tax cut and the \$20-billion increase—are presented as highly inflationary, 'current policy' as bad for



the employment picture. That leaves the \$10-billion increase as the path to heaven."

Let us look at these CBO projections in a little more detail, because they are really at the heart of the matter. In comparing, for example, the effects of a \$10-billion tax cut with its alternative, government spending of \$10 billion, the CBO argues that it is better for government than for citizens to spend the money, on the whole, because when government spends, the money "multiplies" faster in the economy than when private citizens do.

The analysis comes right out of Paul Samuelson's *Economics*, by the way: "Dollars of tax reduction are almost as powerful a weapon against mass unemployment as are increases in dollars of government expenditure." The key word is "almost."

In a CBO publication it is put this way: "Generally speaking, [government] purchases of goods and services have more impact per budget dollar on output and employment than broadly based tax changes or changes in income-support programs."

In another background paper, the CBO explicitly argues (with charts and figures) that \$10 billion spent on public-service employment stimulates both employment and the growth of the economy more than a \$10-billion tax cut.

This seems implausible, especially when one considers the make-believe nature of many public-service jobs (paying people wages to do things for which there is no apparent need or demand).

What, then, is the precise reasoning behind the bias in favor of government spending? How are the figures arrived at? The answer really does disclose the fundamental bacterium growing at the heart of the culture of Washington. Government spending is more stimulative than private spending, the government analysts say, because the government will spend *all* of that \$10 billion. Private citizens, on the other hand, will save part of it. Savings—such is the state of the economic art in Washington—are thought of as money withdrawn from the economy and stuffed in a paper bag underneath the mattress.

It seems hard to believe. A meritorious impulse of the hard-working man is actually impugned, presented as a disservice to the nation. The man who forgoes consumption, thriftily putting money aside for hard times or retirement, is told that he is really doing more harm than good. (Current tax policy reflects this bias, as in the low ceiling on savings interest rates, the reporting of interest to the IRS, and the Social Security system itself, which in effect tells people that they don't have to save for retirement.)

Government policy today is such as to dissuade all but the most tenacious saver. This is so despite a high correlation between countries with high savings rates and high economic growth. (In ignoring this correlation, does Washington not betray that it really is not—despite its rhetoric—pursuing policies of economic growth?)

The CBO's economic assumptions and philosophy have not escaped unscathed within the economics profession. Mike Evans, while he was president of Chase Econometrics last year, told the Joint Economic Committee on Capitol Hill that "the CBO study is actually a landmark in incompetency."

Rep. John Rousselot (R-Calif.) replied: "But in our budget process we base a lot of our great decisions on that."

Later on, at a Budget Committee hearing, Sen. S. I. Hayakawa (R-Calif.) asked Mike Evans: "If the CBO logic is accurate, why is it that countries like Japan, with a savings rate of 25 percent, grow more rapidly than we?"

"That CBO report received a certain amount of notoriety since it came out," Evans replied. "It has been widely discredited."

"It has been discredited?" Senator Hayakawa asked.

"Yes," Evans said. "There is an almost perfect correlation between the rate of growth and productivity and GNP and the proportion of national resources devoted to savings. As you mentioned, Japan has a 25 percent savings rate, and they have a rate of growth of 10 percent a year, compared to our growth of 4 percent. It is not only Japan. If you ranked the eleven major industrialized countries in the world, there is a perfect correlation between the amount of savings and the amount of growth. The United States comes in dead last in both of those."

"Why do most other countries have a greater savings rate than we?" Hayakawa asked.

"The tax policies of those countries are different than ours," Evans replied, "and they encourage more savings."

Sen. Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma then asked: "Is the fact that we spend \$120 billion in defense and Japan spends only very little—does that have anything to do with this?"

"I don't think it has much to do with it," Evans said. "The defense spending represents only about 6 percent of the total GNP now, and we are talking about a difference in savings rates between the U.S. and Japan which is far greater than 6 percent."

Notice that it was Henry Bellmon, *Republican*, who tried to come to the defense of the reigning Keynesian orthodoxy.

"Government policy today is such as to dissuade all but the most tenacious saver."



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THE SINGLE most valued adjective in the CBO's thesaurus is "nonpartisan." The CBO is nonpartisan in its brochures and nonpartisan on the front page of the *Washington Post*. How can such an ideological institution make this claim and get away with it? The answer has a horrible simplicity. An institution, program, or idea that wins bipartisan support can justly claim to be nonpartisan in nature. Therefore, the most valuable supporters of the CBO's analyses have been not Democrats but Republicans. If they were ever to withdraw their support—even if they still lost all key committee votes—they would be in a good position to accuse the CBO of promulgating partisan economic theories.

Republican Henry Bellmon's support of the "budget process" has therefore been of great value, not just to the CBO but to Edmund Muskie and his majority committee staff, to the Carter Administration, and to proponents of big-government spending everywhere. Bellmon is the "ranking" minority member of the Senate Budget Committee (the senior Republican, in other words), and the minority staff of twelve is his staff, just as Muskie's majority staff of forty is appointed by Muskie. Bellmon's support of the budget deliberations has therefore resulted in a united Washington front. Rather than resist the spend-more philosophy, he assented to it, made it unanimous.

Bellmon's willingness to go along here is an indication of the general collapse of Republican morale in Washington. The Republican leadership these days reminds one of the Vatican in the 1960s. It has shown itself ready to throw out the old traditions and sing along with the New Trend just at the moment when people were beginning to doubt whether Liberation was the true path to happiness. If only they had stayed on course, most of their former congregation would in the end have returned to the fold. But in the GOP leadership position up popped Sen. Howard Baker of Tennessee, and he spotted a trend going over the horizon, Keynesianism, and he ran after it. So did Henry Bellmon.

In return for his "cooperation," Bellmon somehow received glowing press notices. The *Tulsa World* wrote that Bellmon had made "commonsense compromises" on the Budget Committee. The *Daily Oklahoman* praised him for performing a "thankless task" as a member of a "largely unappreciated committee," one that "puts a lid on spending."

In addition, Muskie did a great job of sharing the laurels with Bellmon. At every budget deliberation he would congratulate his "friend and partner in this budget process." On one occasion he applauded his "courageous votes

for fiscal responsibility." By claiming that the budget process itself was of overriding importance Muskie distracted attention from the budget deficits, which were larger than they had been before the process began.

As far as the Budget Committee staffs are concerned, it is not surprising that Muskie's merry majority likes to devote its day to arguing for more government spending. The course of fiscal appeasement is appealing to the minority staff not because they are big spenders at heart, necessarily, but because it is the path of least effort. If the minority staff accepts the recommendations of the majority staff, the Republican staffers have most of their work done for them. On the other hand, to resist is to visit upon oneself the mighty task of coming up with *different* forecasts, alternative five-year projections, different "modeling"—a paper blizzard of one's own. It takes a lot of time and effort, involving staying on late at night—and keeping the Senators at their desks for longer hours, too. Only the zealous are prepared to do that, and the Republicans have largely had the zeal knocked out of them.

Besides, the Republican who goes along is more likely to find that the money is spent in his district and to his advantage with grateful constituents. The diehard fighter might find the money drying up. So it is fairly easy to postpone worrying about America, the nation as a whole, until after the next election.

There are, of course, a few zealots on the Republican side, mostly relative newcomers. One such who went onto the Senate Budget Committee this year is Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah. Another is Sen. William Armstrong of Colorado. Most of the GOP members of the Budget Committee are relatively junior, because the Republicans have a "mutually exclusive" rule, preventing Senators from serving on two of the five most important committees. (The other four are Finance, Appropriations, Armed Services, and Foreign Relations.) The effect of this rule is to prevent Republicans from accumulating much seniority on the Budget Committee. This also makes it difficult for them to resist the expertise, or become familiar with the ways, of the opposition because the Democrats have no such rule.

At one point this year, Senator Hatch proposed a cut in one of the budget categories and he was asked if he had "five-year projections" of the effect of such a cut on inflation, employment, and so on. Five-year projections Congress in its budgetary aspects is gradually being transformed into a Central Planning Bureau by such tactics. The CBO, of course does five-year projections. How can Hatch try to work in—(Continued on page 116)



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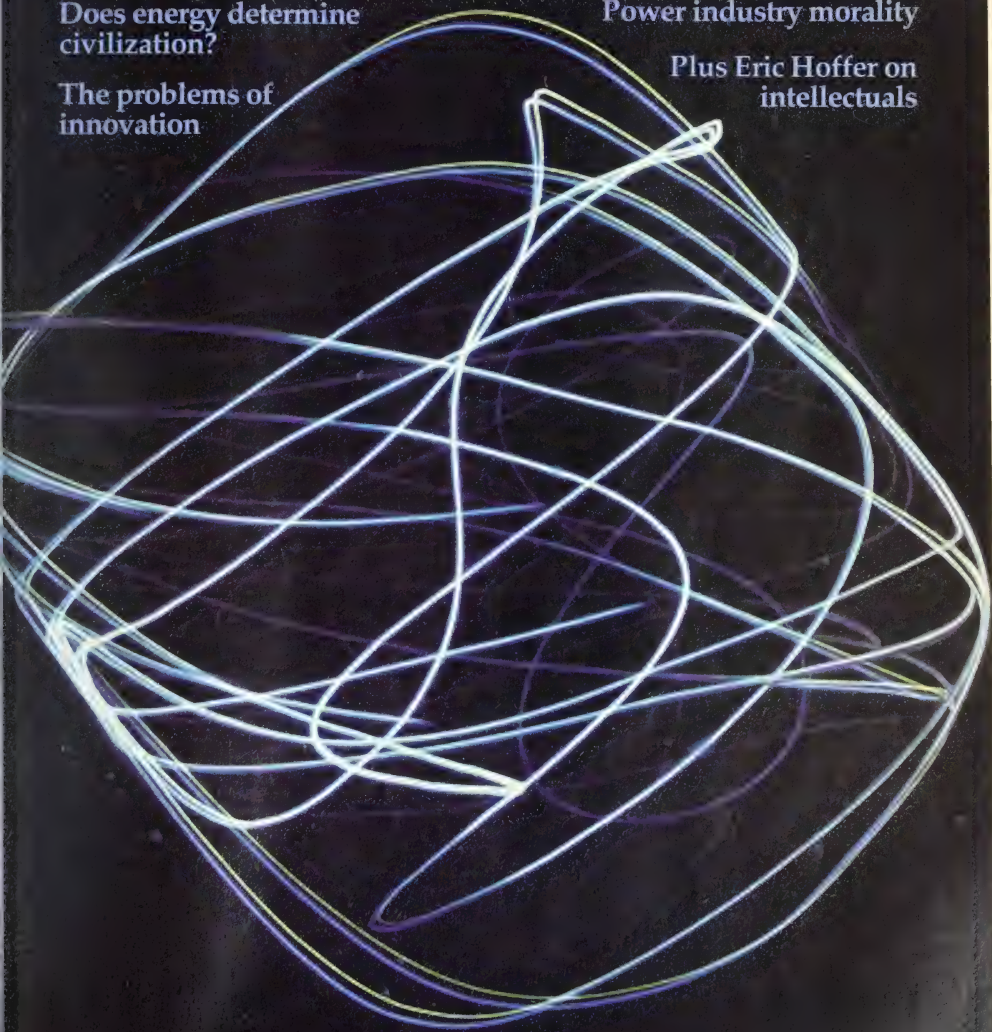
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THE GROWTH OF LIMITS

by Chauncey Starr



NOTE: As one of the official events of the Edison Centennial commemorating the 100th anniversary of the electric light bulb, the Electric Power Research Institute and the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation were cohosts of an international Symposium on Science, Technology and the Human Prospect, held in San Francisco in April, 1979.

Some 45 distinguished, international scholars, scientists, governmental officials and businessmen delivered papers during the three-day Symposium. The Edison Electric Institute is making a cross-section of the views expressed by the participants available in this form because it is dedicated to offering concerned citizens impartial information on the various issues affecting the nation's electricity needs, usage and delivery systems.

The articles in this insert, severely edited to meet space limitations with the authors' kind permission, can only begin to suggest the diversity of subject matter and range of opinion presented at the Symposium. Readers interested in obtaining the complete text of the Symposium proceedings should contact Pergamon Press, Fairview Park, Elmsford, N.Y. 10523. In addition, a 45-minute videotaped documentary of the Symposium has been produced. For information on its availability, contact the Electric Power Research Institute, 3412 Hillview Avenue, Post Office Box 10412, Palo Alto, Calif. 94303.

Symposium is edited by Rees Behrendt and designed by George Kurtin.

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We now live within a framework shaped by complex technology, and we can't help but be concerned about how that technology will affect our future.

I believe history supports this assertion: science and technology have continually relieved the limitations of man's ability to live in the circumstances provided by nature, and they continue to do so.

Science and technology have permitted enormous growth in the world population by improving man's ability to increase food production; to accommodate to harsh climates; to provide transportation and communication for the world's goods, services and ideas; to increase available resources and use them more effectively; and to live longer in better health.

Thus, science and technology historically have opened new frontiers for mankind, not only permitting but also stimulating the "growth of limits." I do not accept the premise that constraints on such growth are in view or that our long-range planning should be determined by today's perceptions of existing limits. I believe that a long future of expanding expectations continues to be an available option if we take advantage of the fact that technology is an unlimited resource of the human mind.

The real question we face is: do we want to accept the idea of limits as a guide to human expectations and societal planning, or do we want to keep alive the idea of expanding expectations and new horizons? If we choose expansion, we need more science and technology applied to a spectrum of uses and to the problems of dealing with the undesirable side effects of growth.

The recently popular "limits to growth" theme was based on the assumption that natural resources and ecology impose a near-term limit on our ability to continue to derive materials from the earth and to handle safely residuals of growing industrial processes. For proponents of this theme, the obvious course would be to limit the personal economic expectations of those now alive and to limit sharply the growth in the world's population. This is a seductive dogma, because if it were socially and politically feasible to accept such limitations, and thus reduce the worldwide demand for goods and services, we would simultaneously reduce the stress on our natural environment, on our political and social institutions and on our problem-solving and decision-making mechanisms. But such a prescription acceptable from a social and political standpoint? Perhaps it is for the comparatively wealthy, but what about the poor people of the world? For those, limits to growth would mean lives of hopelessness.

The continuing debate on energy supply and demand epitomizes these issues. Those who press the view of man-made energy processes alter the natural ecology appear to forget that human society also has a complex energy ecology woven into its fabric. As with natural

Dr. Starr is Vice Chairman of the Electric Power Research Institute. This article is from his keynote address to the Symposium.

ology, any change in this total system of relationships will affect all its components. Popular ignorance of this fact has led to many simplistic notions regarding the role of energy in the quality of life, ranging from the idyllic position that the less energy used, the better the life, to the opposite extreme, the need for unlimited abundance. Neither extreme has sufficient evidence to support its validity.

When we examine social groups with very low energy complements, we find they are frequently on starvation's edge, ridden with malnutrition, endemic disease and physical misery. It has been estimated that one-fourth of the world now lives on this edge of survival. Given a free choice, such groups avidly seek more energy. The vehicle for energy to improve the quality of life is technology, and this is intuitively understood by the world's peoples.

Thus, if personal aspirations worldwide cannot be reduced, limiting economic growth would create major—and perhaps catastrophic—strains on our international political and social institutions.

I challenge the factual validity of the assumption that resources are limited, which is at the root of the doctrine of limited expectations. I believe that the resources available for use into the distant future are not generally limited, because history testifies that advances in technology expand the availability of resources. Technology does this by providing increased efficiency in the conversion of resources to human uses, i.e., less is needed to produce more, and in the extraction of traditional resources from the biosphere, as well as by providing methods for the conversion of dormant substances into new resources. So far, we have extracted only a small fraction of the store in the earth's crust. History also tells us that the apparently limited resources available to mankind in any one period of time become just a small fraction of the resources ultimately available to later generations because of the increasing contribution of science and technology.

As an example, let us consider the availability of oil. If exploration and extraction had been restricted to the techniques that were current about 1900, we would have run out of oil generations ago. At the beginning of this century, available U.S. reserves were about one billion barrels—enough for a decade then and for about two months of our present use. What oil was available then is found by looking for signs of seepage at the surface or by drilling around salt springs. In that period, we didn't have the sophisticated exploration, deep drilling or extraction techniques available today. Technology has enabled us to discover oil repositories miles underground and to force that oil out, as well as to obtain it through seismic pressures. And we've been able to open up oil fields under the oceans. There is no possible way that anyone without high-technology engineering equipment could develop a deep sea oil well. This is truly a frontier opened by technology.

This is a good example of how technology has kept increasing the available supply of all mineral resources and illustrates how science and technology are instrumental in expanding the limits of man's resources.

This expansion of limits has occurred with minerals, with food, with transportation, with communication, with health and with extending livable space in unfriendly, harsh environments.

There is ample stimulation to reassess the role of science and technology in our social development, to explore what we have done for the world's nations, what they mean to the individual and where they are likely to go in the future. Such an assessment is particularly timely for the electric industry. The major economic growth of the


industrial nations has taken place parallel with and supported by the development of new uses for electricity, so the electric industry recognizes its responsibility as a partner in this growth.

Those of us pursuing the applications of science and technology believe that all progress in these fields is good for humanity generally and the developing nations in particular. Yet we do recognize the serious negative impact that some of the byproducts of these technical developments have had on individuals, on specific social trends and on the environment in which we live. We are also conscious of the possibility that such social costs might become so large that we must carefully examine what we are doing and perhaps better plan our activities.

There has been—during this past decade, in particular—a growing attack by a portion of the intellectual community on the social merit of the industrial section of our society. The electric utility industry is one such target, as are the automobile industry and the chemical industry.

A segment of the intellectual community has suggested that we should somehow restructure our society to remove the heavy hand of technology. This has been one of the popular tenets of the environmental movement. The basic question being posed is: are we the passive subjects of an uncontrollable technical system, or are we able to control this system to improve our destiny? I believe we must understand all aspects of such fundamental questions and assist our society in finding its balance.

Whether or not one pushes technological growth depends partly on individual philosophic beliefs and partly on the perceived prospects for technology. For more than a hundred years, most societies had unquestioned faith that technological growth was worthwhile. Our cultural conceptions of the role of science and technology are very fundamental to the average man. They affect his immediate activities, his future and that of his children and grandchildren. In the last few decades, our faith in technology has been questioned. And these doubts have created public issues bearing not only on the applications of science and technology but also on the creation of new knowledge. To some, the disapproval of the intended end of a particular science or technology means that research to develop fundamental knowledge should be stopped. But to do so would inhibit the potential for its good use, as well as for its bad. The debate on genetic engineering is such a case. In contrast, as an example of the stimulation fostered by an approved objective, the continual search for military superiority has historically extended scientific and engineering frontiers. It is an interesting commentary on the priorities of nations that this search for military strength has focused resources on new technology as no other social goal has done. It is indeed regrettable that our peaceful objectives are not equally stimulating.

It is my own belief that science and technology are powerful and unlimited resources for bettering man's condition; that the undesirable byproducts of their applications are susceptible to reduction by these same arts; that science and technology are the key to the "growth of limits" for resources and to the application of these resources for useful purposes, as well as to the breaking of constraints on human expectations and aspirations; and that future generations will be able to manage competently the world they will inherit—one that I believe will be better than the world my generation inherited. I believe this can, and will, happen, provided our sociological and cultural structures do not inhibit the intrinsically fruitful activities of science and technology—whether from fear of future uncertainties or from paranoid anxieties created by the doomsday syndrome. 

THE FALLACY OF THE ENERGY-CIVILIZATION EQUATION

by George Basalla



Among the critics of energy conservation are those who claim that as we use less energy we will become less civilized. They believe that the retreat from high energy consumption will lead mankind directly back to the caves that provided his first shelter. The immediate response to this warning is that the first substantial use of petroleum dates not to the Stone Age but to the period of the Civil War. And furthermore, that even a fifty percent reduction in our total consumption of energy would not transport us back to Paleolithic times, nor even to the Dark Ages, but to the 1950s.

Nevertheless, apocalyptic visions of an American society forced to reduce its energy consumption continue to haunt us. We foresee a doomed civilization, with tractors paralyzed in the fields, abandoned automobiles rusting on weed-choked freeways, factories as quiet as tombs and our haggard descendants facing a life of everlasting drudgery. These are strange visions for a nation that uses a 5,000-pound automobile to drive a mile in order to buy a half-dozen cans of beer that will be drunk in an overcooled room and the empties thrown on the trash heap instead of being delivered to an aluminum recycling center.

How did it come about that a people who use and waste vast amounts of energy believe that the alternative to high energy consumption is the primitive life endured by early man? And, even if the choice is not between the Stone Age and life in the twentieth century, what is the relationship between energy use and level of civilization?

The current approach to the energy problem ignores the

fact that for almost two centuries energy consumption in the West has had an ideological component. High energy consumption has not only been associated with physical comfort, economic well-being and military strength, it has also been identified with the idea of civilization itself.

The tendency of the Western nations to equate energy use with level of civilization was accurately and satirically described by British author Aldous Huxley. Said Huxley because we use a hundred and ten times as much coal as our ancestors, we naively think that we are a hundred and ten times better intellectually, morally and spiritually.

When energy consumption thus serves as a measure of the height of civilization reached by a nation, then changes in energy use will have wide implications. As less energy available per capita, the nation is thought to lose its standing among the world's civilizations.

Those countries with high rates of energy consumption are ideologically committed to maintaining them, and those with lower rates are motivated to copy their energy-hungry, civilized superiors. This ideological commitment helps explain why so many of the less industrialized nations felt necessary to have their own nuclear reactors. It was not necessity that drove them to acquire them but the feeling that they might be left behind in this latest event in the energy civilization race.

To simplify consideration of these matters, I will assume the existence of an energy-civilization equation. Although it has never been formally written out such an equation, it has pervaded western thought for the past two centuries. It can be found in the physical, life and social sciences, and in technology, philosophy and popular culture.

The left side of that equation contains energy, a well-defined physical concept. On the opposite side appears civilization, which is a subjective evaluation of the intellectual, moral and aesthetic accomplishments of a society. The two sides of the equation are directly related, so that high energy consumption results in high civilization and low energy consumption in a low level of civilization.

The energy-civilization equation originated in the early nineteenth century. Prior to that time, the introduction of new energy sources was not linked to the advancement of culture. Take the example of the Middle Ages, which witnessed a great power revolution. Although the waterwheel, windmill and effective harnesses for draft animals transformed social and economic life, no medieval thinker ever moved to claim that they were the ultimate sources of the cultural and spiritual achievements of the time.

The rose window of Chartres, the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, or any other of the accomplishments of the age were never related to the energy that had recently been put to new and practical uses. And conversely, medieval man never feared that dry streams, windless days and exhausted harnesses would mark the end of his civilization. Yet, by the

1900s, the energy-civilization equation found easy acceptance, and claims and warnings of this sort were gaining in popularity.

The formulation of the energy-civilization equation was made possible by the Scientific Revolution of the seventeenth century. The emergence of modern science and the subsequent identification of scientific and technical advancement with human progress provided the kind of intellectual environment in which a newly introduced power source could be dealt with differently than it had been in the middle Ages. The Scientific Revolution created a world view in which energy and civilization could be directly related.

In the 17th century, Sir Francis Bacon listed the great inventions that had changed the course of civilization; they were the compass, gunpowder and the printing press. With the rapid growth of science and technology, it was an easy matter to extend Bacon's original list by adding new inventions. By the late 18th century, an obvious addition to that list was the steam engine, which produced large amounts of power and had noticeable social and economic effects. It quickly became the symbol of industrialization and the social, economic and cultural changes that accompanied it.

The steam engine appeared to offer strong evidence that energy could be converted into civilization. However, neither the steam engine nor any other mechanical device could provide a proper theoretical basis for the energy-civilization equation. Only the sciences could supply such a foundation, and they did so during the 19th century. First physics and chemistry and then the biological, social and behavioral

THE VAST INCREASES IN ENERGY CONSUMPTION OVER THE PAST FEW DECADES HAVE NOT NECESSARILY ENHANCED OUR CHANCES OF REACHING A NEW STAGE IN CIVILIZA-

ences were called upon to offer theoretical justification for linking energy with civilization.

Among the great successes of nineteenth-century physics was the discovery of the laws of conservation of energy and the establishment of a science of thermodynamics. Early in the century scientists had their first glimpse into the possibility of energy conversion. At that time they were interested in the conversion of heat to light, light to chemical action, chemical action to motion, motion to electricity, electricity to magnetism and so forth.

Some men of science were not satisfied to confine the conservation series to the boundaries of the physics and chemistry laboratory. Is it not possible, they argued, to convert physical forces or energies into biological ones? After all, it occurs naturally every time an animal assimilates its food. And cannot the series be extended from the biological to the nervous system that energize the nervous system? And why stop here? We must not take the next step, the one that connects nervousness to the mind and to the study of moral and intellectual energy?

If one answered "yes" to these questions, then there existed no theoretical barrier between the physical concept of energy and the moral and intellectual progress that characterized civilization. It was in this way that the energy-civilization equation finally found an apparently respectable place for itself among the sciences.

Once the path had been opened between physical energy and culture, it was possible to imagine energy conversion sequences that began in the firebox of a steam engine, or in the windings of an electric dynamo, and ended in the world of morality, social and intellectual concern and artistic creation. Most scientists preferred to work on the first few links of the sequence, links that were clearly empirical. On the other hand, there were those who saw no problem in speaking of vital mental and social energies and in determining their relationship to the energy of the physical sciences. Some cases in point:

*Wilhelm Ostwald, German chemist, 1919 Nobel prize-winner and creator of Ostwald's energetic imperative: Do not waste energy! He attempted to develop an energetic basis for all the sciences.

*Henry Adams, American historian and author of the famous essay, "The Virgin and the Dynamo," which evaluated the effects of two great and different energies upon the course of Western civilization, concluding that the force of electricity was every bit as mysterious and powerful as the religious force produced by medieval Catholicism's veneration of the Virgin Mary.

*Frederick A. Soddy, British scientist, 1921 Nobel prize-winner and a pioneer in the study of the atom. Soddy believed atomic energy would lift civilization to heights undreamed of, if atomic warfare could be averted and a new economic system established for a more equitable distribution of goods and services.

*Henry Ford and Thomas A. Edison, who followed Soddy's lead in dealing with energy and economics. Ford proposed using an abandoned Muscle Shoals, Alabama, hydroelectric plant to produce enough cheap power to supply a city 75 miles long and 15 miles wide. Edison proposed financing the scheme through Energy Dollars, imprinted with a depiction of the hydroelectric plant because energy was the true basis of money. Politics intervened to kill the grandiose scheme.

And the energeticists marched on. The dreams of hydroelectric plants and a new society persisted to the time of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's administration, when they became part of the Tennessee Valley Authority program. The TVA mystique was to reappear in such unlikely and remote areas of the world as Aswan, Egypt, and the Mekong River delta in Vietnam.

It would be foolish to argue that hydroelectrical establishments have no influence on their social and intellectual milieu. However, it is also true that they have not created the revolutionary changes promised by their promoters. We have yet to create a new civilization merely because we harnessed the power of some wild river. There remains a considerable gap between the Utopian societies projected and the economic and ecological liabilities of power dam construction.

I have touched upon but a few of the many manifestations of the energy-civilization formulation. Sigmund Freud linked sexual energy, and its sublimation, to civilization. Some current anthropological and sociological thought links energy and cultural achievements. There is astronomical speculation that ranks the civilizations of yet to be discovered extraterrestrial beings according to their supposed access to different amounts of energy. The disclosure of new energy sources—coal, petroleum, the atom, the sun—is accompanied by highly exaggerated claims that they would be the basis for a new society and a higher civilization. Finally, a National Science Foundation course describes energy as follows: "Energy is the source and control of all things, all values and all the actions of human beings and nature." That is the sort of description that at one time would have sufficed to define God!

Having resolved the historical question of the origins and diffusion of the energy-civilization equation, we are still left wondering about its ultimate validity.

In this equation, slight increases or decreases in energy use cause large fluctuations in the level of civilization. If man uses less coal or electricity, then he is surely doomed to wear animal furs, gnaw on bones and pass his time shaping stone tools. On the other hand, if he only adopts solar, fusion or some other new energy source, then the gates of the Garden of Eden will be opened to him. We should be suspicious of a formulation that places mankind so precariously between apocalypse and utopia. And we should be cautious in accepting an equation that does not reflect the fact that the vast increases in energy consumption over the past few decades have not necessarily enhanced our changes of reaching a new stage in civilization.

Perhaps one reason why our rapidly increasing energy consumption has not placed us upon a new plateau of civilization is the way in which we choose to use that excess energy. The crude formula linking civilization with energy has no place for questions of choice. It deals with

"THERE IS A GREAT DANGER IN ASSUMING THAT CULTURAL ATTAINMENTS MUST WAIT UPON THE FULFILLMENT OF CREATURE COMFORTS."

energy expended per capita and does not ask if the energy was squandered on trivialities, wasted in destructive wars, or utilized to advance the social, moral and cultural accomplishments we identify with civilization.

Another weakness of the equation grows out of the vague way energy is defined within its context. There is no quarrel when the term is limited to the physical domain. But what are we to make of the analogical reasoning that led to the writing of serious essays on moral energy, sexual energy or religious energy?

If the energy-civilization formulation encouraged the loose definition of energy, what did it do for the definition of civilization? Immediately we are faced with an entirely different situation. Energy has its roots in the physical sciences, so that no matter how it is misapplied the original concept maintains its integrity. Civilization, on the contrary, never has had the kind of precise determination we associate with an accepted scientific concept. Civilization has always been a value-laden word that has changed over time and has been redefined again and again in order to meet current political, social or cultural needs or desires. It is an ill-fated formula that would attempt to link closely two such disparate entities as energy and civilization.

Yet, even if we attempt to make the equation workable by focusing upon one nation at a given time and assuming that its people will agree on what is meant by civilization, we find grave difficulties. When the English economist and philosopher Stanley Jevons was predicting the imminent decline of British civilization in the 1860s, he supposed that coal, iron and railroads had raised England to the pinnacle of culture. Not so, responded the contemporary literary critic Matthew Arnold. Let us suppose, said Arnold, that two hundred years from now England was to be swallowed up by the sea. Then, when the rest of the world recalled England's greatness, they would undoubt-

edly remember the Age of Shakespeare as her golden hour and not the time of Alfred Lord Tennyson and Queen Victoria. The Elizabethans managed quite well without the steam engine to produce a culture that is admired throughout the world.

Should a twentieth-century opponent choose to enter into the debate with Matthew Arnold over this matter, he would probably draw upon statistics proving modern superiority in life expectancy, literacy, nutrition, public hygiene, speed of transportation, equality of opportunity and so on. In short, he would shift the argument to the arenas of quality of life and economic growth. Matthew Arnold would reply to his modern critic as he did to Jevons, by defining national greatness as that quality that excites love, interest and admiration for a nation and its deeds. And Arnold would be correct in doing so, because throughout its history the energy-civilization equation has stressed the highest cultural achievements of man, and not the more mundane aspects of his life. After all, the steam engine was praised not merely because it could pump drinking water to city dwellers but because it was a dispenser of culture.

A persistent critic would then respond that there just might be a connection between the availability of potable water and the creation of high culture. Must not the artist and scientist be fed, clothed and sheltered before he can address himself to artistic and scientific affairs? There is no simple reply to this question. However, I believe it calls for something far more profound than the energy-civilization equation, which has often been put forth as the definitive answer.

There is a great danger in assuming that cultural attainments must wait upon the fulfillment of creature comforts

"THE ELIZABETHANS MANAGED QUITE WELL WITHOUT THE STEAM ENGINE TO PRODUCE A CULTURE THAT IS ADMIRABLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD."

that man could not study the stars, think about gods or ornament a piece of pottery until he had a full stomach, roof over his head and a wall around his city. The moral historians and anthropologists learn about the early history of mankind, the more they are convinced that science, religion, and art were always part of his existence, and no refinements he cultivated after reaching a certain stage of economic stability. Neither historical nor anthropological research supports the popular view that economic necessity is prior to, and prepares the way for, the moral, intellectual and aesthetic life of man. Therefore I, for one, would reject the simple correlation of energy consumption, economic growth and civilization.

In the final analysis, it is not crucial that all of our criticisms of the energy-civilization equation be accepted. It is much more important that the equation is recognized as a pervasive, if often implicit, element in both popular and sophisticated approaches to energy and society. If the equation is as worthless and potentially dangerous as I think it is, then it should be exposed and discarded, because it supplies a supposedly scientific argument against our efforts to adopt a style of living based upon low levels of energy consumption. If it is a generalization of great truth, then it deserves a more refined handling than it has received from its supporters to date.

POWER INDUSTRY MORALITY

by Alasdair MacIntyre



We are in one of those phases, recurrent in American history, in which morality has been rediscovered yet once again. It is characteristic of such phases that a hunt for scapegoats ensues, focusing our concerns in precisely the wrong way on precisely the wrong issues. Blaming and punishing individuals becomes a substitute for asking what it was in the structures of our common life that at the very least made possible and perhaps even positively engendered moral fault and failure.

The present fashionable concern with morality in general and the practice of scapegoating in particular concentrate their concern almost exclusively upon breaches of the kind of moral rule that tells us only what we ought not to do. Our very concern with an emphasis upon negative, prohibiting rules leads us to lose sight of what is, in fact, centrally important to morality and thus, in turn, to fail to give due importance to these self-same negative, prohibiting rules.

The record of the electric power industry, in abstaining from breaking such negative, prohibiting rules, is by and large an exemplary one. Paradoxically enough, insofar as I am inclined to question the moral resources of the electric power industry, it is because in one way its moral record is as good as it is. The morality of the industry has been essentially a negative one of proved abstinence from wrongdoing.

Since the end of the Great Depression, the electric power industry has inflexibly interpreted its legally mandated task, at the heart of which is the requirement to supply electric power on demand. The American electric

power industry not only supplied power with a success unparalleled in human history, but actually participated in creating the demand that made that success necessary to the rest of American industry. All this was achieved in such a way that neither the more general question: "Growth for what?" nor the more specific question: "Electric power for what?" needed to be raised, let alone answered. Those questions implicitly were held to be questions only for consumers, just as questions of the legal constraints to be imposed on the provision and use of electric power were held to be questions for the Congress and for citizens.

The morality required and practiced by the industry was generally a strict morality of non-intervention in every area but that which it and others regarded as its own legitimate realm. There was one positive aspect to the morality: its basic assumption, so firmly held as scarcely needing to be stated, was that the providing of electric power within the limits set by these negative constraints was an unqualified good.

Environmental concerns did not emerge until the very end of the period about which I am speaking; and the obvious connections between the provision of electric power and the possibilities both of providing employment for an increasing work force and of increasing the comfort of domestic life reinforced this assumption. The consequence was that a whole range of decisions came to be treated as purely or almost purely technical decisions to be

handed over to the economists and the engineers: what types of plant should be built, where should they be sited, at what points should investment be made, what skills did the industry need. Congress provided the mandate, the consumer provided the data for prediction, the executives of the industry provided the commercial integrity and the skills for answering such questions, but the questions themselves were technical, not moral.

The electric power industry—and in this it has been no different from the rest of us in modern society—has allowed its moral perspectives to be defined too much in terms of the negative prohibiting and constraining rules and not enough in terms of positive goods that ought to inform its tasks. It is those goods that provide the distinctive moral dimension in any definition of the future tasks of the electric power industry. We can very happily take for granted the need to observe the requirements of the negative rules; what we do need is a more explicit assertion of the industry's positive moral tasks.

One positive moral task of the industry is to assume a large public responsibility in areas that it has hitherto treated with a scrupulous but, if I am right, partly mis-

placed respect as the responsibility either of the Congress or the executive branch of government or of the industrial, commercial and private consumer. That responsibility is to urge, cajole and compel our society to make certain choices and to make those choices in as open, as explicit and as rational a way as possible. There are two different kinds of reason why this responsibility falls to the electric power industry. The first is concerned with its unrivaled strategic position in the supply of power and with the scale and scope of its resources, especially the industry's accumulation of relevant knowledge and relevant skills. Both government and the general public have to learn what are the applications and consequences of alternative energy sources under specific local conditions of particular communities and environments. Engineering, economic, environmental and social considerations are going to have to be presented within a framework of political choice.

It is perhaps obvious that the members of the electric power industry are, as a group, uniquely well-fitted to present such choices. It would be required of them that they transcend their position as one special interest group among others. Would we then be asking them to become moral supermen? There is no simple, glib answer. But part of the complex answer is that we have asked no less from a variety of special interest groups in times of national crisis, especially during the Second World War.

The second type of reason for suggesting that the industry has this special and relatively new responsibility is that so far those who have been conveniently assigned this task by the democratic process have signally failed to discharge it in any but the most inadequate ways.

We have in our society only two institutionalized methods for coordinating individual preferences and transforming them into public choices: those of the market and its allied institutions, and those of government legislation, taxation and regulation. It is scarcely surprising that public debate has focused, explicitly and implicitly, on energy questions as elsewhere on the choice between those two, and that the form of public debate has been largely that of an indictment of each of these methods by

the proponents of the other. The sad fact of course is that both parties are right; both methods are grossly defective, and specifically so with respect to the kind of choices that our society now needs to formulate.

Consider first some defects of the mechanisms of the market. Markets only provide mechanisms for coordinating individual preferences once those preferences have been formulated and expressed in acts of consumption. The market, therefore, is of no help to us in those areas of life where we have to decide what our patterns of consumption are to be, how our preferences are to be ranked, how our desires are to be ordered. The debate on energy is centrally about investment; and it is a debate that has to be conducted within what Daniel Bell has felicitously called the "public household." We need to reason together in order to discover with what choices we want to enter the market. We are, that is to say, at a point in the argument

where to tell us to rely on the mechanisms of the market is not so much mistaken as irrelevant.

There are weaknesses and defects in our system of political decision-making that correspond precisely to the weaknesses and defects of the market. It, like the market, is responsive to the pressures of the present much more rationally than to those of the future, partly because our ability to predict the future accurately is in general extraordinarily limited. And it, like the market, is far more effective at expressing already formulated choices on familiar issues than at formulating new possibilities of choice in unfamiliar areas. Neither the market nor the political system will provide the ordinary citizen with an adequate arena for formulating and expressing radically new choices of the kind that the energy debate thrusts upon us. And if public discussion that will enable ordinary citizens to formulate and express radically new choices does not take place, then the political and economic outcomes will inevitably be sadly defective.

But who is to begin the debate necessary to supplement our conventional economic and political institutions? What is to educate the educators? I see very few individuals, institutions who are both capable of taking up this task and who possess the resources and the strategic position to carry it through, apart from those individuals and institutions comprised by the electric power industry. The work compels them to interact with both producers and consumers at essential points. They have a peculiar responsibility, which arises from the fact that if they do not discharge it, it is unlikely that anyone else will. If the industry does embark on this task, it will perhaps be accused of trying to preempt the democratic process; but it does not take action that will render it liable to such accusations, the democratic process itself may fail us.

What then is the task, and why does it have more dimensions? In order to answer this question, I shall have to state briefly and unoriginally what I take the energy crisis to be. There is no more of a shortage of available energy now than at any other time; what has suddenly become unavailable is energy at the kind of low price to which we have become accustomed. What we now have to debate is what we are prepared to pay for what and to whom and how we are going to pay for it. The major possibility that we confront is of a gigantic shift in patterns of investment. And if we invest massively in new energy sources or in new ways and to new extents in existing sources, then we shall necessarily be shifting our investment away from something else important to our lives. Hence the energy crisis is a crisis about our whole way of life and not just about energy.

It is not difficult to see that when we rethink the whole range of questions facing America as questions about energy, four different kinds of moral concern must arise. The first is a concern for complexity. Oversimplification, the sacrifice of complexity, is in fact a crucial form of the vice of untruthfulness. Yet this is not the only morally damaging harm that is likely to arise from oversimplification of the issues. Just because so many different kinds of issues of policy and practice interlock at the point of energy use, there is no simple way to assess the costs and benefits that will arise from any particular proposal. However, for example, are we to weigh as considerations relevant to the same proposal the harm of damage to the environment against the harm of making fewer jobs available to those who badly need work, and both against the harm of injury and death to a certain number of presently unidentified individuals? It is always much easier for us to consider these issues in a piecemeal, local way, in which some particular compromise—determined through bargaining

circumstances and balance of power—will, in the end, at least, satisfy the particular, local contending interests. Our whole political and legislative process is directed towards oversimplified statements of problems and consequently, not only oversimplified but unjust solutions.

Because our culture possesses no general set of standards that will enable us to evaluate costs and benefits of different types in a single rational argument, it is all the more important that our evaluations satisfy two minimum requirements of justice. The first is that everyone is equally involved—and where energy is concerned that is everyone—should have a chance to say what is to be done at a cost and what as a benefit. The second is that, so far as possible, those who receive the benefits should also bear those who pay the costs and vice versa. Neither the first nor the latter principle has received anything like adequate attention in recent debates. When environmentalists urge policies that will significantly reduce the

OTHER PEOPLE ARE IN THE OTHER PEOPLE

number of jobs that might otherwise be available, it is likely, perhaps never, the case that they are able to show that those who would lose their opportunities of work are the same people who would benefit from the investment or that those who would lose their opportunities to work have had a part in shaping the conception of the criteria of costs and benefits involved. Environmentalists in the present have sometimes been as untrammelled in endangering other people's jobs as industrialists in the past were in endangering other people's investments. Equally, when opponents of nuclear power status urge policies that will significantly increase our dependence on coal, the lives that will be lost as a result of their policies are not their own. Justice demands only that everyone have a voice and a vote, but that the people—the populations that will bear the relevant costs and dangers, or most of them—have more of a voice and more of a vote than others.

There is at least one further requirement that must be met if justice is to be served. Because the energy crisis is primarily a crisis about the investment of resources, ordinary citizens are going to have no opportunity to understand how the costs and benefits of different investment policies do and will impinge upon them, if the costs are systematically concealed by subsidy. For the inhabitants of most advanced countries, the cheapness of energy to the consumer in the past 50 years has disguised its true costs. Ordinary citizens respond to their everyday experience of energy, if their everyday experience conceals what they are really paying for energy in all sorts of disguised ways, and no amount of theoretical education is likely to succeed. Only if there is a widespread perception of what the costs and benefits of different energy policies are can we decide both democratically and rationally how it is just to distribute costs and benefits.

Justice and truthfulness are not the only virtues central to determining energy production and use. Another is the ability to live with unpredictability.

We need to plan on a large scale, but we also have to recognize that our plans are for a future that is always apt to surprise us with its unexpectedness. In part, our social future is unpredictable because of the ways in which the future development of mathematics, science and technology are unpredictable. An obvious and obviously crucial example is the mathematics of Turing or of von Neumann, work essential to the development of modern computing science and engineering, and work whose outcome could not have been rationally predicted in advance.

In changing the social world and its national environment, we also change ourselves. No matter how sophisticated our social planning with respect to energy or to anything else, we can never rule out the possibility that in the course of implementing our plans we shall acquire views, interests and desires markedly different from those that led us to draw up and implement our original plans. Hence it is crucial that our planning is not so inflexible that it leaves our future selves—let alone successor generations—with no or few options acceptable to them because we were, at an early stage, too rigidly insistent on what is now acceptable to us.

It follows that there are great moral as well as practical dangers in making too many large-scale irreversible investment decisions that foreclose on future choices. This is especially a danger because the urgency of our immediate needs always tempts us towards short-term solutions.

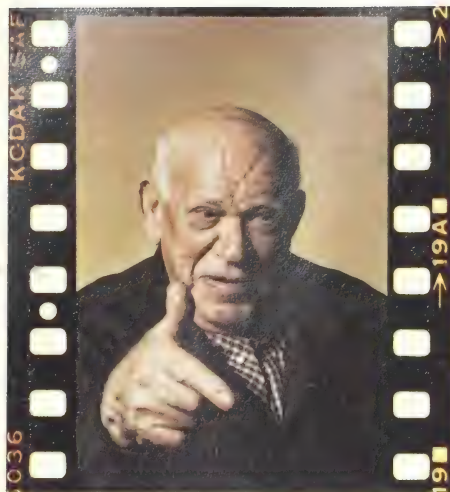
Some of my statements about justice might seem supportive to the advocates of massive investment in nuclear power, while what I am now saying about the need for an ability to live with unpredictability may seem to endorse what some of their critics have said. But what matters at this juncture is not so much the particular policy implications of particular points; rather, it is the need to underline the fact that we ought not to expect moral considerations all to point in one single policy direction. There is a genuinely tragic dimension to the energy debate in that any particular policy direction is going to involve the sacrifice of some authentic goods for the sake of others. Our culture lacks any clear sense of how to handle tragic situations, situations that reveal our moral and human limitations in relation to the tasks imposed upon us.

Because we have never learned to face up to our moral limitations, we have lost to a large degree our vision of positive possibility. We have trudged for so long into a future of apparently limitless consumption that we do not now find it easy to remember who we are and what links us to others. The notion of possibility is always the notion of some future form of community that provides us now with standards and goals by which to diagnose our various forms of inadequacy and to set about remedying them. Just such a common vision—partial, not always coherent, but providing the essential sustenance for our constitution—was implicit in the founding of this republic.

What I am suggesting is this: that to press forward in the public arena the debate about energy, in such a way as to make its moral dimensions clear so far as possible to the whole society, will reveal to that society that it is, to a degree that a good deal of political rhetoric conceals from us, involved in a moral crisis as well as in an energy crisis. The prospect is a dismaying one and requires courage: we do not know how to reason together morally in an effective way. And this lack—just because it is something wanting in the social order as a whole—will never be remedied unless we face it as a society.

BEWARE THE INTELLECTUAL

by Eric Hoffer



From the early days of the Industrial Revolution, intellectuals of every sort predicted that the machine would make man superfluous. Right now, it would be difficult to find a social scientist who does not believe that automated machines and computers are eliminating man as a factor in the social equation.

The belief that the machine turns men into robots is an a priori assumption that prevents social scientists from seeing that technology is doing precisely the opposite of what they predicted it would do. There is evidence on every hand that the human factor has never been so central as it is now in technologically advanced countries. And it is the centrality of the human factor that makes industrial societies at present so unpredictable.

In the 19th century, which saw a Promethean effort to master and harness nature, little thought was given to the management of man. The ruling middle class could proceed on the principle that government is best when it governs least. Everyday life had a fabulous regularity. Obedience of authority was as automatic as a reflex movement. Social processes were almost as rational and predictable as the processes of nature. It was reasonable to believe in the possibility of a social science as exact as a natural science.

There was also boundless hope, a belief in automatic progress that imbued people with patience.

Mr. Hoffer, the self-educated author of numerous books on social philosophy, is a former migratory worker, gold miner and long-shoreman.

Then came the 20th century! Have there ever been successive centuries so different from each other as the 19th and the 20th?

The 19th century was stable, predictable, rational, hopeful, free, fairly peaceful and lumpy with certitudes.

The 20th century has been hectic, soaked with the blood of innocents, fearful of the future, stripped of certitudes, unpredictable and absurd. The history of the 20th century is a succession of disastrous absurdities: the First World War, the Russian Revolution, the Versailles Peace Treaty, Prohibition, the wild '20s, the Great Depression, the Roosevelt Administration, the Hitler Revolution, the Second World War, the Holocaust, the absurd 1960s and now the Carter Presidency.

What was it that made the 20th century so different from the 19th? The First World War was the sharp dividing line between the two centuries. But it was not the First World War itself, but its aftermath, that shaped our century. Without the breakdown of Czarist Russia and the humiliation of Germany by the Versailles Treaty, there would have been neither a Lenin nor a Hitler Revolution.

We have the testimony of highly reliable observers of the fabulous stability and hopefulness of the pre-war decade. To Alfred North Whitehead, who was immersed in the new physics, "the period 1880 to 1914 was one of the happiest times in the history of mankind."

It is impressive how logic and hope kept 19th century thinkers from contemplating an unpleasant, let alone apocalyptic, denouement as the fulfillment of the Industrial Revolution. Few in the 19th century were aware of the explosive irrationality of the human condition. No one suspected that once nature had been mastered, industrial societies would enter a psychological age in which man would become a threat to mankind's survival.

No one foresaw the disintegration of values and the weakening of social discipline caused by the elimination of scarcity. A logician like Marx could not foresee the downfall of capitalism by ever-increasing efficiency rather than by ever-increasing misery. Hardly anyone in the 19th century foresaw the chronic unemployment and the loss of a sense of usefulness caused by increased ambition. No one feared that drastic change would upset traditions, customs and other arrangements that make life predictable. Finally, no one foresaw that the education explosion made possible by advanced technology would swamp society with hordes of educated nobodies who want to be somebody and end up being mischief-making busybodies.

Strangely, those whom thinkers of the 19th century viewed with alarm were the masses. Some thought that the masses loathed continuity and that their clamor for change would topple all that was noble and precious. Others believed that, once the masses were given political power, only education and prosperity could preserve social stability. How naive to believe in a stabilizing power of prosperity and education after we have seen what affluence and education have done!

To Freud, it seemed that individuals composing the

es support one another in giving free reign to their discipline. No one had an inkling that anarchy, when it would originate not in the masses but in violent priorities, including the minority of the educated. Nothing that was said about the anarchic propensities of the masses fits perfectly with the behavior of students, professors, writers, artists and the hangers-on during the 1960s.

The masses are the protagonists of stability, continuity, law and order. It is curious that Disraeli—remarkable—should have had a truer world view of the nature of the masses than his liberal contemporaries. He sensed the conservatism and patriotism of common people. Could it be that, as a genuine conservative, Disraeli was more attuned to the eternal verities of man's existence? Con-

HE
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ring also how timely and relevant were Disraeli's thoughts about what makes nations strong and great, it is almost to wonder whether you have to be a conservative if you want to be up to date.

The 20th century saw not only the fulfillment of the Industrial Revolution but also the fulfillment of wars started in the preceding century. There is hardly an atrocity perpetrated in the 20th century that had not been advocated by some intellectual in the 19th.

The 19th century was dominated by men of action; the intellectuals just talked. And no one expected savagery to have consequence. The intellectuals entered the 20th century convinced that it was going to be their century. Had they not made the French Revolution? They saw themselves as the coming ruling class. But the Industrial Revolution gave power to the middle class, and the intellectuals were left out in the cold.

It is the predicament of the middle class that, although it is in mastering things, it is awkward and almost helpless when it comes to managing men. Thus, when the Industrial Revolution became more and more central, the middle class, drained of confidence by the First World War and a deep Depression, found itself in deep trouble.

The stage was set for the entrance of the intellectuals. To the intellectual, power means power over man. He cannot conceive of power moving mountains and telling rivers where to flow. He is in his element commanding, brainwashing and in general making people love what they hate. He glories in the role of medicine man and charismatic leader. And feels godlike when he makes words come from flesh. Thus, he has made the 20th century a century of words par excellence. In no other century have words become so dangerous. A failure to recognize this can have disastrous consequences.

Now, viewed from any vantage point, the 19th century is a sharp historical deviation. About 150 years ago, the accident was catapulted into a trajectory away from the ancient highway of history. We can now see that the trajectory is the loop that turns upon itself and is curving back where it started. We can see all around us the lineaments of a pre-industrial pattern emerging in post-industrial society. We are not plunging ahead into the future, but falling back into the past. The explosion of the young,

the dominance of the intellectuals, the savagery of our cities, the revulsion from work are all characteristics of the decades that preceded the Industrial Revolution. We are returning to the rocky highway of history and are rejoining the ancient caravan.

The significant point is that the people who are rejoining the ancient caravan are not what they were in pre-industrial days. They are more dangerous. The unspeakable atrocities of the 20th century have demonstrated that man is the originator of a great evil that threatens the survival of mankind. The central problem of the post-industrial age is how to cope with this human evil.

It is conceivable that if the exhaustion of raw materials and sources of energy make it imperative for a society to tap the creative energies of its people, it may in doing so also tap a new source of social discipline, for the creative individual, no matter how highly endowed, must be hard-working and disciplined if he's to accomplish much.

There is no invention that will take the hard work out of creating. Moreover, since the creative flow is never abundant, the greatest society is likely to be disciplined by a new chronic scarcity. The trouble is that the coming of the creative society will be slow and faltering, and we must find other defenses against evil.

What I'm going to advocate may seem far-fetched. But in this case, all suggestions are legitimate. As things are now, it may well be that the survival of the species will depend upon the capacity to foster a boundless capacity for compassion. In the alchemy of man's soul, almost all noble attributes—courage, love, hope, faith, beauty, loyalty—can be transmuted into ruthlessness. Compassion alone stands apart from the continuous traffic between good and evil proceeding within us. Compassion is the antitoxin of the soul. Where there is compassion, even the poisonous impulses remain relatively harmless.

Compassion seems to have its roots in the family. It is conceivable that the present weakening of the family may allow compassion to leak out into wider circles. So, too, the cultivation of esprit de corps, which is the creation of family ties between strangers, may spread compassion.

The question is: can we make people compassionate by education? It is natural to assume that the well-educated are more humane and compassionate than the uneducated. But, believe it or not, the reverse seems to be true. When Gandhi was asked what it was that worried him most, he replied, "The hardness of heart of the educated."

We have seen the highly educated German nation give its allegiance to the most murderously vengeful government in history. The bloody-minded professors in the Kremlin, as Churchill called them, liquidated 60 million Russian men, women and children. We have also seen a band of graduates of the Sorbonne, no less, slaughter and starve millions of innocents in Cambodia and Vietnam. The murder weapons that may destroy our society are being forged in the work factories of our foremost universities. In many countries, universities have become the chief recruiting ground of mindless terrorists.

I've never been a teacher or a parent, and my heart is savage by nature and therefore unfit to tell people how to implant compassion. Still, I have the feeling that perhaps the adoption of a certain view of life might bear the fruit of compassion. We feel close to each other when we see our planet as a tiny island of life in an immensity of nothingness. We also draw together when we become aware that night must close in on all living things, that we are condemned to death at birth and that life is a bus ride to the place of execution. All of our struggling and vying is about seats in the bus, and the ride is over before we know it.

CAN SCIENCE TURN A PROFIT?

by Simon Ramo



One reason for the current deceleration of technological innovation in the United States is the recent wave of "anti-technology" public opinion. A substantial fraction of our nation's citizens seem to equate technology with the devil. In attaining our high production of goods and services, as they perceive it, we have been crowded into congested cities before we have learned how to live together. Television means to them rapid programs, loaded with violence, that miseducate our children. The automobile, they note, kills 50,000 people a year, fouls the air and forces us to spend hours each day in traffic snarls. We waste money landing a man on the moon while landings at our airports are increasingly less safe. The atom bomb may destroy civilization, and the nuclear reactor may poison our environment. We make our soil more productive, but insecticides may do us in.

It can be argued, of course, that those who make these statements list only the "bad" and overlook the "good." Also, they obviously fail to distinguish between the tools of man, valuable when properly used, and man's own misuse of them. However, the presence in the nation of a broad anti-technology bias, applied indiscriminately, impairs our overall ability to reach objective, sound, non-emotional decisions on the development and employment of technology. This prejudice, like all prejudices, stands in the way of our arriving at meaningful value judgments.

Dr. Ramo, cofounder of TRW Inc., serves as a consultant to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy.

The majority of the public in the United States does not seem to understand the fundamental necessity for a strong program advancing technology to meet the public's insistent requirements to have a growing standard of living, low unemployment and tolerable inflation rates.

We have two routes for initiatives to things done in the U.S.: free enterprise government. Without a high degree of cooperation between the government and the private sector, and public understanding of the need for this cooperation, technological advance in the U.S. will be highly constrained. Because the government is so important in creating the environment for technological innovation and because innovative capability in the U.S. resides almost entirely in private industry, improved organization to accomplish beneficial advancing of technology depends on the extent to which a harmonious ensemble can be organized out of the three ingredients: government policy, private investment and implementation, and public support.

Currently, inflation, government spending, government policies, and over-regulation have impaired industry earnings and lowered available funds plowback to create technological advances. Unfortunately, an increasing fraction of the most needed and potentially beneficial technological projects call for investments beyond the net worth of most corporations, and large corporations in the U.S. now are essentially not allowed to team up to share the risk. For such projects, the "risk/return" ratio is too great, the start-up losses are high, the time to "turn-around" to an eventual profit phase is too long and the dependence on success on unpredictable political decisions is undeniably close.

The lack of industry incentive to invest funds back into innovation goes with the other characteristics of the U.S. environment: inflation, high taxes, high costs in dealing with government regulatory requirements, high consumption-to-investment ratios, and high ratio of government to private sector spending. Given the state of the economy, a government program to stimulate more innovative effort and R&D in private industry could be nearly so effective as a successful government program to lower inflation, or one to cause more discretionary cash flow to be available to technology corporations by a lowering of taxes. If the government could create these changes, the seeds of scientific and technological advance would quickly blossom into copious crops. Here are some examples that illustrate the relation of the rate of application of technological advance to economic-political constraints.

OIL WELL TECHNOLOGY

existing U.S. continental oil wells were equipped with submersible pumps for secondary and tertiary recovery wherever warranted, our oil reserves would be greatly increased (perhaps even doubled, the experts tell us). Technologically, such installations are thoroughly practical. Most often, the installations would be economically viable as well, if the price per barrel were higher than market controls permit for old oil, i.e., in the range of \$15 to \$20, the nation is paying now for imported oil. Billions of dollars invested this way would bring us tens of billions of dollars in equivalent additional petroleum. The critical price parameter to make the private investment a sound one is outside the free market and is a political matter. Price involves a contest among numerous influential constituencies with wide differences of opinion of the issue. The private sector thus cannot justify investing the required funds.

IMPROVED URBAN TRANSPORTATION

Almost every large U.S. city could gain by installing a class public transportation system. But it has to be the right system. The technology has to be carefully selected to match to each city's layout, industry pattern, population and employment distribution, health care and education facilities. The economic gains could be prodigious. Perhaps half our population could save hours each week in present means for getting to and from work. They would travel at less expense, consume less energy, cut air pollution and decrease the accident rate.

It is intelligent for an American technological corporation to invest its resources with the objective of developing, then selling, and finally earning a return from mass transit systems for American cities? Consider Los Angeles as an example. Imagine that some private company a few years ago decided to devote several years of effort in fitting technology to L.A.'s social and economic needs and designing the multi-billion dollar transit system required. Then, further assume, as we must to be realistic, that all subsystems (vehicles, controls, communications, energy distribution, safety, terminals, maintenance, rights of way, environmental reports, etc.) were out and budgeted.

Would this would have involved an expenditure of a hundred million dollars or more and would be only a beginning. Much of this effort would have had to be targeted for other cities because of the importance of getting prices down by realizing as much commonality as possible in equipment and software for multiple installations. Then the private concern would have to design, build and tool up several plants to start producing the technically required hardware, refine it by full-scale test and manufacture parts in some quantity to be sure of quality and quality before taking on contracts for shipment and installation. If the company had gone this far (it did by now have made over a billion-dollar investment) and had done everything perfectly would it then have succeeded in selling a system to Los Angeles? That is a very doubtful. Who exactly is this customer we have identified Los Angeles? What does Los Angeles truly want and how are its requirements being decided? Can Los Angeles raise the procurement funds? Hundreds of

separate (and often quarrelling, apathetic or self-seeking) groups, both private and governmental, are involved in the answers to these questions.

Potentially beneficial as the proper application of transportation technology might be, the market in any given city is not formed. The "risk-to-return" ratio would be absurdly high for the private corporation electing to develop this field. The start-up cost would be huge. Even assuming eventual success, the time to payoff would be too long and the city or county government's eventual approach to the pricing of the service, fundamental to the promise of return on the private investment, would be too unpredictable.

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY

Done suitably, with a mixture of creativity and common sense, the selective depolluting of major lakes, rivers, harbors and coastal waters stands to yield a good return on the investment in health, quality of life and economic gain through preservation and maintenance of vital natural resources. To achieve practical results, much more scientific research and technological work is needed to understand pollution phenomena more deeply, develop superior non-polluting approaches to use of the waters, and produce a myriad of specialized equipment. Of course, such technical effort would be meaningless or misguided without attention to all the complex interface problems.

What company, or group of companies, would invest in a private overall systems solution for, say, depolluting Lake Erie? This would mean their setting out, with their own funds, to settle the many interactions and to develop the new chemical processes, superior purification and fuel-burning methods, optimum energy-use techniques and the rest. Many specific and difficult scientific and engineering advances would be vital for an intelligent, broad changeover to an integrated lower pollution system. But in what context should the individual technological efforts be chosen? What criteria should be used? Even if a combine could be created of, say, five large corporations that among them possessed all the technical expertise required, how could they presume to design and install a system that would affect the economy and social makeup of the industrialized communities of millions of citizens distributed around the lake?

COAL

By all-out use of science and technology and the full cooperation of government and private industry (neither of which is in the cards today), we could have a plentiful supply of energy for hundreds of years by properly utilizing our huge reserves of coal. Existing technological beginnings can be advanced to desulphurize coal, produce liquid and gaseous fuel from it, mine it more safely, obtain a good deal of it without mining (in situ), burn it more cleanly and more fully and limit environmental harm. The resulting energy supply would be higher priced than today's oil, in part to write off the cost of the technological advances but the funds to pay for the fuel would stay in the U.S.

Success requires both the know-how of private industry and enormous capital placed at risk. A corporation choosing to make a major entry into synthetic gas or liquid fuel from coal by new technology would have to commit funds in the range of billions of dollars, and decades might pass

before a return on that investment could be realized. Indeed, such return might never come, so great are the risks associated with unpredictable government decisions on critical aspects. The complete "system" involves a host of private and public organizations that are semi-autonomous and not readily directed by any one body: landowners, mine operators, labor unions, railroads, power generating and water supply utilities, numerous engineering and manufacturing organizations, county and state governments and many, many agencies in the federal government that deal with prices, environment, labor and transport, to name only a portion. It is not difficult to appreciate why we are not moving very rapidly in developing and applying new coal technology.

Few doubt that energy will be more costly in the era ahead. But with a plentiful supply at the higher price level—in contrast to a subsidized, low-priced and low-quality supply—the United States could prosper, some students of the problem would tell us. If we could bring ourselves to design a national program around the realistic expectancy of a gradually higher price (say, up to twice today's price), we might well discover that private investment would become available and private know-how would be applied to ensure adequate supplies. This would be, of course, because the return on investment would justify the investment. Such a program would require viewpoints by the government and the public differing from the present ones built around the politically popular, but unrealistic and inconsistent, policy that preaches conservation while subsidizing low-priced energy.

FUSION ENERGY

Controlled thermonuclear fusion has the possibility of providing us with cheap and plentiful energy. Many millions of dollars have already been spent trying to understand the underlying physics. It is estimated by most experts that decades will be required before all of the remaining physical scientific and engineering details are worked out sufficiently for this approach to energy supply to be ready for application. It may turn out that it never will prove feasible. The total costs in the start-up phase are in the billions of dollars, maybe in the tens of billions. When we have to speak of funding at such levels, time durations of decades, and major doubts as to basic technological feasibility, we are beyond the boundaries of areas suitable for speculative investment by private entities.

FUTURES

Now what does all this add up to? The high potential for science and technology to benefit the society more and at the same time the difficulty in obtaining the benefits; the inability of free enterprise to encompass more than a fraction of the sponsorship; the limitation on the capability of the government to take over where the private sector cannot provide the desirable advances. What views and policies should we promote as steps to improve the situation?

Let me offer some specific recommendations to the four concerned entities: the free enterprise sector, the government, the universities and the public.

Those interested in preserving the free enterprise system (such as leaders of big business and others who see the free market and the private enterprise concept as valuable routes toward utilization of advanced technology) should accept that ours is a hybrid society. It is not

helpful and oftentimes harmful to press so hard, as supporters of the private sector often do, for free enterprise to be labeled as the all-encompassing answer to problems. Free enterprise should be understood as only to provide a part of our needs. A creative, cooperative relationship between the private sector and the government should be sought, and the often present adversarial relationship should be eliminated.

Government leaders should recognize the government involvement in scientific and technological matters to be permanent and set a long-range policy for that involvement. It should answer such questions as: Which research and development areas must the government sponsor, which are best left to free enterprise? How can required regulatory duties of the government and the setting of the rules for free enterprise be handled so as to enhance and not impair national innovative effort?

The government should appreciate the broad impact of science and technology on virtually every important government decision-making area, and count a heavy scientific and technological effort in the country as vital to the overall national economy. The government should itself be innovative in creating a national environment for innovation. It should direct its sponsorship in scientific and technological matters toward the generation of information to remove risks and thus to enhance the contribution that can be made by free enterprise.

The government should resist the creating of government research and development efforts and expenditures to enhance innovation in private industry. Instead, the government should act on the premise that improvement of science and technology will quickly follow improvement in the economy, this improvement characterized by less inflation, taxes and government spending with discretionary funds for investment in innovation more available to the private sector.

The universities should teach elementary economic concepts to every graduate, so that at least these members of the citizenry would understand such concepts as cost of capital, return on investment, consumption-investment trade-offs, causes of inflation and the fundamentals of the free enterprise system. The universities also should mount increased efforts to discover and develop innovative talent.

Furthermore, the research programs in the universities should be enhanced to include greater emphasis on relationships between advancing science and technology and the social-political-economic structure of the nation. The universities should aspire to be a source of innovative ideas about innovation, including the articulating of alternatives for restructuring the nation's institutions so as to enhance the possibilities of our employing the tools of science and technology to the greatest advantage on behalf of the society.

The public would do well to foster neither of the extreme views: free enterprise alone can do everything best; free enterprise is bad and the government must do everything. If the public is interested in the flexibility of opportunity, motivation and incentives of free enterprise, then it should recognize that free enterprise can only contribute to the nation's needed research and development if private industry is allowed to generate necessary funds for investment. "Profits" should be applauded if they are reinvested boldly and wisely in research and development. Finally, the public should overcome its anti-technology prejudices. It should decide on and for all that science and technology are not independent, external enemies but the public's own tools, and on with seeing that these tools are used to achieve the goals the citizens choose.

IN PRAISE OF SCIENCE

by Philip Handler

For two centuries, concern has occasionally welled up for the societal consequences of one or another technology. But until recently, science itself was viewed by society as an autonomous venture of high integrity whose conduct is best left to science. That wall has been breached, probably forever.

There's been public pressure not to undertake certain things because of fear that society might not be able to live with the answers gained in investigations.

We cannot easily condone any abridgement of the freedom of scientific inquiry. Historically, freedom of inquiry, like freedom of speech, religion, the press and assembly came to be cherished precisely as the scientific search for truth freed itself from dogmatic religious and political thought. Scientific inquiry has challenged the dogma of an authoritarian world for 400 years. It has freed men's minds as it has freed their toil. And it was Thomas Jefferson who said, "There is no truth on earth that I fear to be known."

The new law nor tradition confer an absolute right of freedom from all restraints, but we need accept no constraints other than those found essential to protect other values that are at risk from injury. To use the power of government for the suppression of ideas—ideas that might otherwise flow from research—would take us back to an era of dogmatism. In the long run, it is impossible to stand in the way of the free exploration of truth that someone will learn somewhere, sometime. It remains evident that science cannot be planned far into the future. That we shall be surprised is the only certainty.

The governments of countries that plan central economic research and development to accelerate attainment of the societies they already have in mind. We need to evolve, to accept a pluralistic approach to our problems and to have the multiple instrumentalities of our society—universities, government, industry—engaged in research and development that they find most appropriate, and then let us all choose, however awkwardly, which of their products to adopt.

We have little understanding of the factors that prompted the extraordinary acceleration of science in Europe two centuries ago—or the subtle circumstances that caused the torch of knowledge to move from Europe to America a century later. Presumably, some blend of the frontier democratic spirit, primitive capitalism and the entrepreneurial talents and zeal of inventors were involved. But we do know we now live in an overpopulated, competitive, interdependent world that the United States no longer dominates; that many another once-powerful, prosperous,

dominant civilization has disappeared; and that even now we are sharing the torch of technology with several other nations.

Few of us can readily believe that the United States could lose its prominent place in the world, as have other nations within our lifetimes. Somehow, we feel that the United States is exempt. And yet to think so is to fly in the face of history. Many nations at the apex of their power were inwardly doomed when their will power began to falter, and therefore we should be most careful about retreating from the specific challenges of our epoch.

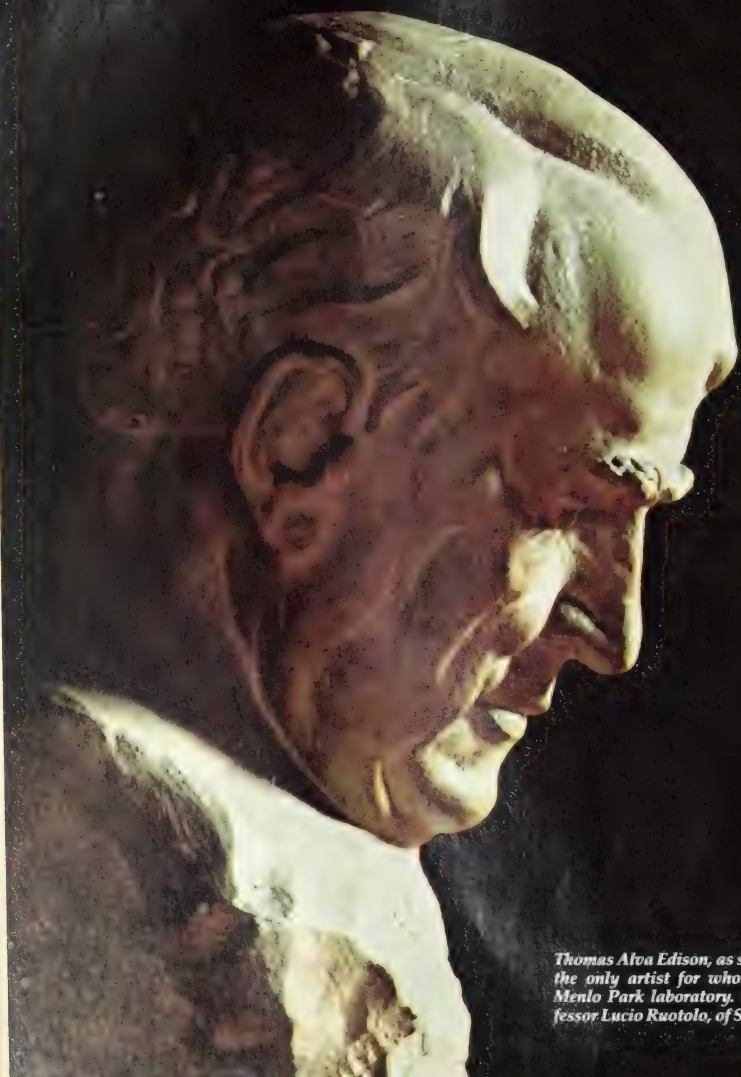
Each noteworthy civilization has grappled with the great problem of its time. For the Greeks, it was the organization of society; for the Romans, the organization of empire; for the Medievalists, the spelling-out of their relationship to God; for the Europeans of the 15th and 16th centuries, mastery of the oceans. And for the last two centuries, it has been the scientific understanding of nature and the creation of an industrial society.

For tomorrow, the challenge is to continue these latter tasks. It is to determine how mankind can live in harmony on this finite globe, establish permanent relationships to its finite shrinking resources as well as with infinite space, and to enable achievement of the individual potentials of individual human beings as we reduce the ravages of disease. If instead, intent on a risk-free society, we succumb to a national failure of nerve, if we always heed the nay-sayers, then again Shakespeare will have been proved prescient in his lines: "There is a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat; and we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures."

Those lines apply to America in the 1980s. Whatever other policies we follow, we can be unabashedly optimistic concerning the prospects for continuing great discoveries in every discipline of science. And yet we should note that even in science the international position of this country is changing. For two decades after the war, the United States conducted the largest, most powerful, most productive scientific endeavor in history, and it has never been more productive than at this moment. But the economic growth of other nations has enabled them also to develop their scientific potential. Today we constitute perhaps one-third of the world effort, albeit our enterprise still seems somewhat disproportionately successful. But it's clear that the others are rapidly gaining; since the fruits of science are universally available, we should be pleased, not dismayed, by that fact, but only so long as we maintain our own scientific capabilities.

Our current malaise stems from a few bad experiences—from the time-delay in meeting the high hopes and expectations raised in the minds of those who appreciate the great power of science, the force of technology. Those expectations have taken on a new light as science has also revealed the true condition of man on earth. And I see no alternative but to address rigorously the principal questions of science and to use our ever widening understanding or increasingly sophisticated technology with grace and charity and wisdom. We're not omnipotent, but neither are we unwitting foils of powerful forces over which we lack control. We've learned not to seek a perfect world. Our joy must be found in those acts by which we exercise our unique capabilities to eradicate what we abhor and to promote that which we value and cherish. I retain my faith that the science that has revealed the most awesome and profound beauties we have yet beheld is also the principal tool that our civilization has developed to mitigate the condition of man. ★

THOMAS ALVA EDISON
IN COMMEMORATION OF
THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE INVENTION OF THE
ELECTRIC LIGHT BULB



Thomas Alva Edison, as sculpted in 1920 by Onorio Ruotolo, the only artist for whom the inventor ever posed in his Menlo Park laboratory. Photograph by permission of Professor Lucio Ruotolo, of Stanford University.

IN OUR TIME

by Tom Wolfe

The Secret Heart of the New York Culturatus

He's Anti-Nuke, like everybody else, but he wishes the movement wasn't so full of earnest California types playing guitars and singing those dreadful Pete Seeger Enlightened Backpacker songs—all those women with snap-around denim skirts and low-heeled shoes and honest calves and their poor wimp husbands with their round eyeglasses and droopy beards and their babies strapped to their chests by some sort of papoose rig and spitting up natural-food mush onto their workshirts.

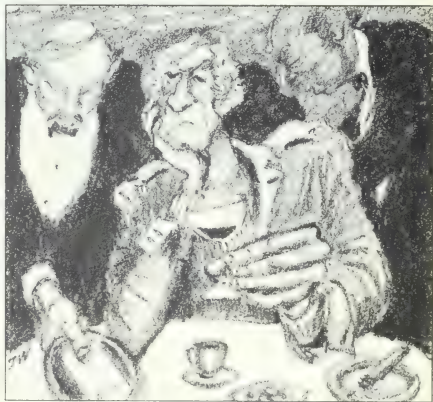
He's for human rights and he's against repression, but somehow he can't get excited about the Boat People: they're a greedy grasping little race that refuses to be assimilated into the new order. Besides, the subject encourages revisionism about the war in Vietnam.

It's tacky to use terms like "Middle America" and "the silent majority." They're so *Sixties*, so out of date. He calls them "the fly-over people" instead. They're the people you fly over on the way to Los Angeles.

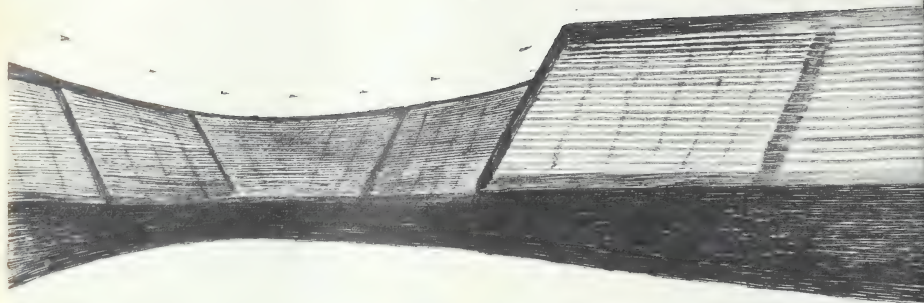
He doesn't start sentences with "hopefully." He doesn't wear tennis shirts with stripes on them. He doesn't rent summer places north of Route 27. He stopped buying Bolla wines even before they started advertising on television, and he stopped buying bell-bottomed pants two years ago. "Christ," he says to himself, "my radar is fantastic!"

The other day he and his friends were doing the usual, standing up for gay rights, blah-blah-blah, and he could see the maid staring at him. He was so goddamned embarrassed! She was probably wondering if he was *one of them*!

He *loved* the gasoline shortage. All those ethnoproles, who come barreling into Manhattan from Queens in their Coupes de Ville and Monte Carlos with their elephant-collar sport shirts open to the thoracic box, the better to reveal the religious medals twinkling in their chest hair, tread back down into the subway where they belonged.



He has an apartment with pure-white walls and a living room with about 4,000 watts worth of R-30 spotlights encased in white cannisters suspended from ceiling tracks and a set of Corbusier bentwoods, which no one ever sits in because they catch you like a karate chop in the small of the back but which remain on the premises because they are in the permanent design collection of the Museum of Modern Art. He has a set of Mies van der Rohe S-shaped tubular-steel cane-bottomed dining room chairs, which are among the most famous chairs of the twentieth century but also among the most disastrously designed, so that at least one guest always pitches face forward into the lobster bisque. The only decorations are of the Honest Toiler sort, such as the wood-fire-kiln Swedish pots in the living room and the eighteenth-century toolheads, suitably blackened, mounted on the walls of the kitchen. He has a thin wife, starved to near-perfection. He's very proud of the place and likes to invite people over.



THE CIVIL-SERVICE GIANTS

A story of
baseball and
bureaucracy
by

Allan B. Jacobs

THE SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS went civil service in 1980. The team—the players, the managers, the coaches, the batboys, and the grounds keepers—all of them became civil-service employees of the City and County of San Francisco that year. It wasn't planned. It just happened.

After an unexpectedly good year in 1978, when the Giants actually finished third after leading for most of the season, the team fell to fifth place in '79. Attendance, which had exploded to well over 1.5 million in '78, sank to 1,500 to 3,000 on weekdays and 10,000 to 12,000 on weekends when the Dodgers were in town. So Bob Lurie sold the Giants near the end of the '79 season to a Brazilian who had made it big selling Amazonian hardwoods in Georgia and was looking for his own tax shelter.

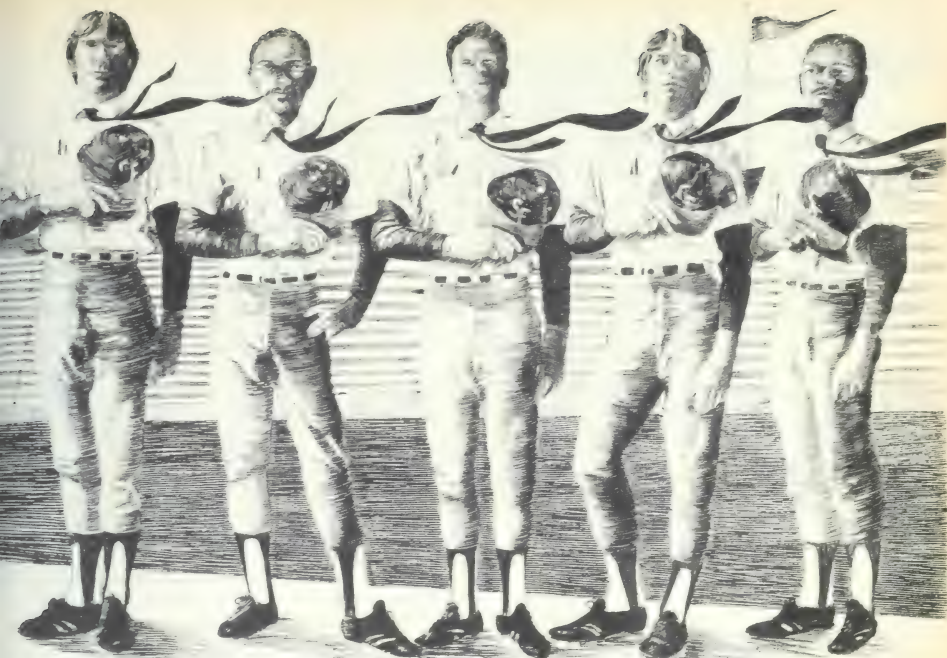
The new owner soon found out about major-league salaries, all those empty seats, and the other competition that was bidding for the fans' dollars in the Bay Area. He concluded that maybe he hadn't bought the best baseball franchise in the world, tax write-off or not, and began thinking and talking of moving the franchise, just as earlier owners had when fans stayed away from games. He felt sure he could

break the Giants' lease arrangement for the use of Candlestick Park.

By now, few people paid much attention to that sort of posturing and threats to leave. Those antics made good press for a day or two, but it was well known that the Giants were locked into San Francisco for twenty years by virtue of an ironclad agreement they had signed with the city's Department of Parks and Recreation. Some long-forgotten lawyer in the city attorney's office had written a lease that bound the two parties together like Siamese twins.

Nevertheless, the city attorney always got a bit anxious when the Giants threatened to leave. He asked a new, young assistant, Hadrian Ness, fresh from the University of San Francisco Law School, to check up on it: Could the Giants get out of the lease? The assignment had been given before and was considered good training by the old pros in the office. But Ness was eager to make his mark and took the job more seriously than his predecessors had. He also had no other assignments just then and wanted to be busy, lest some city councilman demand that his position be lopped off the payroll. City attorneys were about the only category of employees in San

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Ken Gamien

San Francisco that didn't have civil-service protection, and that rankled Ness. After all, the rest of his USFSL classmates who went to work for the city (some 68 percent was the nearly average) were secure for life. Ness was pretty angry about that.

In his research, Ness made some interesting observations. He noticed that the lease as with the Department of Parks and Recreation, not with the city council or the mayor of the city. He recalled that the city charter said something about all Park-Rec employees having to be hired through the civil service. He also observed that the Giants' front office worked in space in Candlestick Park provided by Park-Rec. Some of the Giants' personnel were pretty chummy with the Park-Rec people. After all, they shared the same johns. On a few occasions (once when there had been a printers' strike in town, and once when someone had forgotten to reorder envelopes) the Giants had sent out letters on Park-Rec stationery. What are friends for? It was also a fact that Willie Mays's contract had once been sent with a letter that bore Park-Rec's seal. The head of Park-Rec had framed a photocopied facsimile, just for laughs, of course, and hung it on the wall behind his desk.

From these seemingly innocent observations and from one day seeing the Giants' grounds keepers digging up the pitcher's mound, raking the base paths, and cutting the infield grass—the kind of thing that the city's own gardeners did—Ness came to a startling conclusion: All of the team, including the players, were employees of the city and county of San Francisco, and should be treated as such!

Assuming Ness was right, that meant that, like all Park-Rec staff, the players would have to be hired by civil-service procedures. Among other things, they would have to pass exams, and any new players would have to live in the city. Fantastic! Ness's father, a union organizer (street cleaner working for the city at \$18,000 a year, would be proud of him.

Ness went immediately to his boss to tell him the exciting news, but that august personage was out defending the city on a zoning case. So, while waiting, Ness had lunch with his newfound city-hall friend, reporter Russ Cone. He confided to Cone the significance of what he had found, knowing without having to ask that his friend would treat the matter confidentially.

The story that hit the afternoon papers was headlined CITY ATTORNEY SAYS GIANTS CIVIL

"All of the team, including the players, were employees of the city and county of San Francisco, and should be treated as such!"

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SERVICE. The mayor was quoted on the evening news as responding, "Did the city attorney say that?" San Francisco, as any political-science student will tell you, has a weak-mayor form of government.

Governor Brown the Younger, reached at a San Francisco ashram, thought it was a good idea, but if this was just another ploy of San Francisco politicians to get state money in the post-Proposition 13 era, they had another guess coming. He said he hadn't been born yesterday, you know.

The commissioner of baseball said something to the effect that this was probably just another bit of nonsense coming out of San Francisco and needn't be taken seriously. He thought that San Francisco ought to start trying to solve its baseball problems instead of coming up with such tomfoolery.

Most observers thought that it was simply West Coast high jinks, that the idea was impossible and illegal on its face, and they had a good laugh.

Hadrian Ness didn't think it was funny. He took his severance pay and, with a small grant from the Civil Service Foundation, set up an office and brought the matter to court. Ness also managed to get an injunction against the Giants—or anyone else for that matter—using Candlestick Park until the case was settled. So a lot of people wanted the question resolved quickly. Anticipating appeals, the city and the Giants agreed to let the matter go directly to the California Supreme Court, where it was heard in late January of 1980.

The young grandson of one of the justices had just been traded by the Giants to a Cincinnati farm team in Tennessee. The justice didn't know where Tennessee was, was sure the boy had never been given a chance, felt the whole business of buying and trading players was like slavery, and thought he'd never see his favorite grandson again.

By a one-vote margin, the California Supreme Court agreed with lawyer Ness; the Giants had to be civil service.

SAN FRANCISCO'S ball team became the laughingstock of baseball in almost no time, well before the first pitch of the 1980 season. Baseball, like most other professional sports, was big business. Most fans knew that *where* the team played had almost nothing to do with the team itself. Place was incidental to the business/sport, a vestige of an older, more romantic time, when the owners also owned local breweries and the players might even live on the next street. In the modern era the players had almost never

grown up in the cities where they played. They came from places like Cuba and Mexico. Or the bat boys lived in the home city.

It was an era of trades, options, release clauses, multiyear contracts, and making while you could. Game times and places were determined more by the imagined needs of preprogrammed national television audiences than by local preference. Most people suspected that national and international TV ratings were sports anyway. It was clear that a local team made up of local civil servants who came from and lived in San Francisco, could never compete in an international sport.

The players were dumbfounded. Civil service? Civil servants? They had only recently been given some freedom from the odious "reserve clause" that bound them for life to whichever team owned their contracts. They were making lots of money now that they were almost free to play for the highest bidder. Players knew that civil servants didn't make much money, no one called a civil servant could. So they quickly turned to their lawyers, agents, and contracts.

There was understandable confusion amid the fact and rumor that went the rounds. Old contracts would have to be honored, wouldn't they? Players could play out their options and then try to land with another team—but who would want them? Would there be pay cuts? The lawyers and the agents had a windfall of unexpected fees and commissions while looking after their players' interest. They felt secure in advising the latter to take it easy and see how things sorted themselves out. The season was about to start, and in all likelihood they would be secure for the year.

Player security was actually enhanced when Giants' manager Grubb tried to fire his third-base coach just before the season started. The coach had a drinking problem and was wobbled on the field three out of five days. He kept sending base runners home from second base on groundballs hit to the infield—the runners were always out by forty feet. And Grubb had found out that the coach was having an affair with his wife. So Grubb fired the bouncer who promptly appealed to the Civil Service Commission.

Bernice D'Orsi, head of the civil service, advised her commissioners that drunkenness on the job, during games, had not been proved (Grubb wondered how you could prove that), that the coach sent the runners home on his best professional judgment and it was his judgment against the manager's (who, by sitting in the dugout, was farther from the actual scene of action), and that the wife-stealing business was personal, not professional and

rk-related. Grubb should certainly be able make that simple distinction and not carry er a private relationship into the work en- onment. D'Orsi therefore recommended ainst the firing and was upheld unanimously by the commission. Grubb was dazed by e experience. He had always been able to e coaches at will. It was one of his few plea- res. Worse yet, now that the business about s wife and the coach was out in the open, e would have to move out of his apartment. e had never had to do that before. He locked himself in the manager's office for three days d then looked for a new place to live. Hearing the news, some old-time players rely hanging on, as well as some rookies not ite out of the minor leagues but praying ver to go back to the Fresno of the world, ere seen walking into the office of the civil- rvice union.

THE SEASON opened without incident. The mayor threw out the first pitch (to D'Orsi, for a little humor) and was booed by 4,000 paying fans. In s abbreviated speech he wondered if this ight not be the dawn of a new baseball era, d was booed again. The game, against the adres, started well. The Giants were hitting, ostly doubles. By the fourth inning, the ird-base coach had sent three base runners heir doom at home plate; and then the roof ved in. The Giants lost, 12 to 1.

Team morale was none too good to begin th, and soon got a lot worse. Not many peo- e came to the home games; most of them ere silent when they did. Without kids clam- ing for their autographs, players' fragile egos ere hurt. No one asked for a city traffic en- eer's autograph—why would they want a y baseball player's? San Franciscans backed nners, and it was clear that a civil-service am could not be a winner, so the fans stayed me and the players felt bad, and their play- g suffered.

Road trips were worse. The team was oughed at in other cities. Players were asked er and over how it felt to be a civil servant. hat would they do during the off-season, en all the other players got to stay home d fish and drink beer? Would they be street aners or, since they were part of the De- rtment of Parks and Recreation, would they playground leaders, or gardeners? The ball- ayers didn't think that kind of question was o funny. They stayed in their hotel rooms, rgoing their usual lobby seats, where, in tter times, they had been oohed and aahed er. Now, people stared and were more prone

to point their fingers and snicker than to li- onize. To top it all off, groupies who followed big sports teams stopped following the Giants. Civil servants, even if they were baseball play- ers, didn't have much sex appeal.

In late May, in the eighth inning of a score- less game in Philadelphia, Grubb went to the mound to replace Denny Sullivan, his rookie starting pitcher, who had just walked three Phillies on twelve straight bad pitches to load the bases. Sullivan refused to leave the game. He said he was doing fine and had a right to remain that was protected by civil service. It was a matter of professional opinion. Besides, this could be his first major-league victory. Grubb had told the kid to quit screwing around and to go take a shower. Sullivan refused. He was the pitcher, he had been designated the pitcher, and he had a right to pitch. They weren't even behind. Walks were as much a part of the game as strikeouts. They went into the records. It was like being fired without cause. He wanted a civil-service hearing.

Grubb went for Sullivan's throat. It took three Phillies to separate the two Giants, and the umpire threw them both out of the game. The story made national headlines. Here was the inevitable consequence of bureaucrats and lawyers meddling in places where they had no business. It made no difference to the base- ball world that the Civil Service Commission later upheld Grubb's action on the grounds that a department head had the right to assign staff as he thought best to carry out the de- partment's responsibilities. The commission did, however, censure Grubb for lack of phys- ical restraint.

The baseball establishment came to the real- ization that the Giants were no laughing mat- ter. By the All-Star break in early July, when the subject of the big-league meetings was what to do about the Giants, the team was al- ready twenty-five games behind the leading Dodgers. Meetings of baseball moguls are sel- dom productive and this was no exception. There were indications that the Giants would be bankrupt by September, so baseball de- cided to wait until the season was over. In the meantime, the problem took care of itself. Well, almost.

AS STRANGE AS it may seem, it was the totally bizarre circumstances of the Giants that began to have a positive effect on the team's fortunes. The first sign was when it became apparent that there was a hard knot of fans that showed up at most home games and sat together, isolated, out in the right-field stands. The 1,000 or so

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people were readily defined by all the vacant seats around them. They were, of course, civil servants. They took advantage of cheap tickets available to them as part of a promotion to stave off financial disaster and came every night. They soon found out that the afternoon rest-break that the union had won for them could be stretched into four or five innings on day games. They were a happy, fun-loving bunch who soon got to know and like each other and found Candlestick Park a good place to hold informal meetings to discuss working conditions and wages. They cheered on their union brothers in uniform, regardless of how the game was going or of how badly their heroes played. They were a positive crowd.

San Francisco's civil-service fans helped, but not enough to make any difference. The nature of San Franciscans made a difference. Remember, San Franciscans are the kind of people that voted for McGovern, legalizing pot, legalizing abortions, and the rights of homosexuals, and against Jarvis-Gann, the death penalty, and a lot of other things that later became important. To some of them, in July, the notion of their local team competing against the national and international impersonal institution that baseball had become gave the whole matter a David-and-Goliath character. There was no question but that the Giants were the Davids, and there was no question of which was the right side to be on, especially since the home-town-ers were getting beat up so badly. Fans could come out and joyfully cheer the Giants on and not be disappointed when they lost. More people, relaxed, came to the games to cheer (and laugh at) the underdog. It was nice to be seen there, like conspicuous consuming. Girls went alone or in pairs, and so did boys. Candlestick Park became a good place to meet other people, and maybe go home with them. It was an even better place to go once the management added white wine (served in little plastic goblets) and a remarkable mini-quiche to its choice of food. Still more people came.

The players felt they were being laughed at at first, but they joined in the good humor of it all and actually played better, losing less frequently.

Attendance jumped again when civil-service employees from around the Bay Area made the Giants their favorites and came from as far as Milpitas.

Civil servants from other major-league cities got the message. When the Giants were on the road they began to find themselves cheered on by whole sections of fans. These were local municipal employees coming to support the

visitors. Hell, they were civil-service brothers all. It was possible to identify with the Giant and they needed a hand. So the city employees of St. Louis came to cheer the Giants and beat the Cards. The Cards muttered about the fickleness of their fans and went into a slump, losing four straight to the Giants.

Team morale went up. It skyrocketed when in New York, some civil-service groupies showed up to give the boys support. Jocks were jocks after all, regardless of their civil status. The Giants took two of three from the Mets, and then murdered the Expos in three straight after someone translated the French banners, "*L'union fait la force—Vive les Giants.*"

Some young kids out in Walnut Creek were bugging their parents to move to San Francisco so that the kids could have a chance to make the Giants' civil-service-regulated team. This was not lost on city politicians and city planners who for years had been looking for ways to stop the flight of middle-class families to the suburbs. Local baseball might just succeed where lousy schools had failed.

By the time the Giants returned from their road trip toward the end of July, they were a relaxed, winning bunch of guys. Morale was up, and they were playing over their heads. A ten- or twenty-game fluke streak perhaps, but fun nonetheless.

As attendance rose, the team continued to play well. They were still fourteen games out of first place by the end of July, a distinct improvement, but it was clear that they were too far behind to ever catch up.

In early August, two stars from the hated league-leading Dodgers announced that they were playing out their options and would toil for whichever teams would pay them the most millions the next year. The two were already pocketing something in the vicinity of \$700,000 a year—each. That made the Giants, with their civil-service aura, even more popular. (Management wasn't talking about how much three or four of its stars were making, or that fifteen of the Giants were planning to do the same thing as the two ungrateful Dodgers.) The Dodgers went into a slump with the announcement of the impending defections, and they dropped nine straight, four to the Giants on a memorable weekend when 250,000 people squeezed through Candlestick's turnstiles to see the civil-service Giants.

By the end of August, they were only four games out of first place and were driving hard. Just then, Fidel Castro announced that he would love to come to the World Series if the Giants won. The idea of a public, socialist team was inspiring and could only help Cuban-

S. relations. Even people from the Haight-Ashbury started coming to games after Fidel's announcement. The Giants took over first place September 15, then won another three straight from Atlanta and led the pack by three games on the twentieth.

SAN FRANCISCO was a madhouse. There were only two weeks left in the season. Orders for World Series tickets were pouring in. Every hotel room was booked in anticipation. The papers and television were full of the Giants. No team had ever come from twenty-five games behind to win the pennant. And this was a civil-service man! Howard Cosell marveled over "the incredible vitality of *this* team and *this* town, *the City by the Golden Gate*."

In city hall, more than one observer commented that the workers there seemed to stand straighter and taller than usual. They were dressing better (fewer combinations of jackets and pants from different suits of slightly different colors) and seemed to have a shine about them. The level of public service hadn't changed, but it was a more purposeful inefficiency. The mayor recalled that he had predicted a new era, and Governor Brown reminded everyone that the idea was his in the first place. Hadrian Ness was being wooed by the city attorney to take an important, high-paying job, but was holding out for tenured status.

Manager Grubb was getting a divorce, but that didn't bother him since he had become a celebrity. He also had a wonderful, albeit in-scapegoat for the few times the Giants lost. He could publicly berate the performance of his third-base coach—"How can I manage when civil service makes me keep people like that?" No one could blame him if they failed on occasion. He had no control of the dolts. The team's success under such circumstances was due to his superior managing, the wonderful San Francisco fans, and a solid core of dedicated players.

On September 21, late in a game with Chicago that the Giants were leading by eight runs, the third-base coach had Billy Murphy, one of the dedicated ones, try to steal home. What would have been a superfluous score. Instead, the Chicago pitcher, furious that the Giants would add insult to injury, threw his last pitch of the game, directly at Murphy. He broke Murphy's leg.

Murphy, the second baseman, was a steady but not outstanding member of the team. He just did his job, and a lot of people didn't even know his name. So it didn't seem to be

a crucial loss—at least not until the new second baseman showed up the next day.

Gussie Johnson, sent by civil service to replace Murphy, was a big, strapping, fast, San Francisco-bred Chinese who had been batting .420 in the minors (albeit with the Golden Gate Park Dunes). The only trouble with Gussie was that he was left-handed.

Manager Grubb was livid. He screamed to D'Orsi that it was impossible to have a left-handed second baseman. A southpaw couldn't possibly make the pivot necessary on double plays. There had never been a left-handed second baseman in the history of baseball. Ask Cosell.

D'Orsi, as ever, was calm to the onslaught. She pointed out that Grubb was just using an old, old ploy of all the other department heads to undermine the civil-service merit system: They were always trying to create so-called specialist positions, geared to particular people, rather than general positions where many applicants could compete and get jobs by merit. Only recently, the city-planning director had been caught trying to create something called an urban-designer position, when it was clear that a city planner was a city planner. Just because the planner who passed first had a background in political economics (Marxism) was no reason that he couldn't design a park as well as the next planner. An infelder was an infelder, by God. None of this specialist-second-baseman subcategory nonsense.

Besides, Gussie had competed in a well-advertised exam and had come in first. It made no difference to D'Orsi that Gussie had got such a high score by virtue of the extra points that came his way automatically as an armed-forces veteran. D'Orsi also let Grubb know that she had observed that there were no Chinese on the ball team. Was Grubb living testimony that the bureaucracy was bigoted, and was he looking for a civil-rights suit?

D'Orsi told Grubb that the civil-service union watched her every step. She was powerless, she couldn't set a precedent for the rest of the civil service. The union's attorneys would have the matter in the courts for months, and in the meantime Grubb would have no second basemen, not even a left-handed one. Anyway, if Gussie didn't work out, then Grubb had the right to terminate him during the first six months, *if* there was a good reason. Grubb perked up at this, but only until he realized that two of the next three people on the "infelder" list were over forty-five (but under sixty), part of a new, "Not So Senior" minority group that was just emerging in San Francisco. The third was known to be active in the women's movement. The fourth person

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on the list might be a winner—he was young and didn't know anything except how to play baseball—but he was much too far down on the list to offer Grubb any hope.

Grubb wandered unevenly back to Candlestick Park. That afternoon Gussie had four hits and scored the Giants' two runs. In the ninth inning, score tied 2 to 2, bases loaded, one out, the Cubs' batter hit solidly to the Giants' shortstop, who threw to second base for one out. Johnson's relay to first was not in time to catch the batter for a double play, and a run, the winning run, scored from third. D'Orsi heard the game in her office at city hall and was ecstatic about Gussie's hitting.

The Giants were still two games ahead, and the next day Grubb moved his right-handed third baseman to play second and tried Gussie at third.

Grubb did fire Two-Fingered Brown, the back-up catcher that civil service sent. Brown had a rifle arm but no control of where the ball went when he threw it. That characteristic hadn't been screened out in the civil-service exam, which was three-quarters written (and tested the player's knowledge of baseball) and one-quarter actually playing in the field. Brown, a reader, had done magnificently on the written exam (100 percent), so it didn't matter that he only got a score of 40 on the playing part of the exam. His combined score of 85 was more than enough to pass, and with the 15 extra points he got for being handicapped, he came out on top.

Brown had a mania for trying to pick runners off at first base, having done that once successfully in the Little League ten years earlier. In a game against Houston, not two days after the Gussie Johnson incident, Brown tried to pick a runner off at first. The throw, like a shot, hit pitcher Montefusco on the kneecap and that was all for Montefusco for the season and for the Giants that day.

It wasn't all for Two-Fingered Brown, though. Grubb fired him, and his firing was upheld (this being Brown's probationary period, when department heads had absolute discretionary rights). But, as a gesture of kindness and humanity (Brown had two wives and three kids to support), the Civil Service Commission directed that his name be returned to the bottom of the civil service "catchers" list, so that he might have a chance with some other "department." D'Orsi didn't point out to them that no city department used catchers, two-fingered ones least of all. As luck would have it, no one else was on the list at that time (the others who had passed the exam had since moved out of town), so the bottom of the list was the same as the top of the list

and Brown was back with the Giants, certified, the next day.

The Giants' lead was down to one game. The season was drawing to a close.

THERE ARE PEOPLE in San Francisco who will tell you that the season ended the next day, when a new outfielder showed up—in a wheelchair. Many people close to the situation will tell you that never really happened—it was at best a prank pulled by the visiting Dodgers.

It is certain, however, that Manager Grubb had a nervous breakdown the next day. Whether it was the Two-Fingered Brown incident, or the Gussie Johnson affair, or the third-base coach's affair with his wife, or just his hatred of D'Orsi, or one of a thousand other reasons is hard to say. Trained people—civil-service psychologists at San Francisco General Hospital—are searching for an answer now.

Some observers will tell you that San Franciscans live in their own world. They will tell you that there was a World Series in 1981, just as in other years, and that to hear people talk around city hall, the civil-service Giants were in it—or could have been.

For some people in San Francisco, it is still September. October and the World Series are just around the corner, and the Giants may damned well make it. All they need is a good left-handed first baseman and there's a terrific can't-miss prospect just waiting to win it all for the Giants. He was second on the civil service list. The new manager, an expert from Berkeley's School of Public Policy, is in the process of firing the right-handed first baseman the civil service sent, but that could take a while because the case is being appealed.

Some city-hall watchers will tell you the time does not stand still, that it is Monday of the last week of the season and they, the Civil Service Commission, will be meeting this very afternoon to decide the issue. It's on their agenda. They will tell you that there is great expectation in the Giants' offices and dressing rooms in Candlestick Park. The Giants are only one game behind and a pennant is still in sight.

A civil-service clerk, on the staff of the Civil Service Commission, will tell you, just as he told his wife five minutes ago during his break, that a lawyer for the civil-service union, representing the right-handed first baseman, has requested a postponement, and that such requests are almost always honored. Maybe they will decide the matter next week. Maybe the season won't end.

RAYMOND AND ANN

by David Budbill

I
Raymond and Ann kept to themselves and because of that
some people thought them snooty and aloof. It wasn't true.
Other people theorized perhaps there'd been
some great pain in their lives, more than
the stillborn child buried on the knoll
above their house, that kept them from the usual
sociability. No one knew. Personally, I think when they
came
to this mountain fifty years ago they wanted
only silence and each other and having found
these things they were happy.

Raymond was God's gardener. He grew the best of
everything,
his garden always free of weeds, rows so straight
it seemed he planted with a transit.

Although they were poor and everything about the place
homemade, their farm had neatness and an order
reflective of people who know what to do and how to do it
and who do not overstretch the limits of their land
to themselves.

By the time I knew them they were old and didn't have
a team.

only Sandy, middling size, mostly Belgian, who weighed
maybe seventeen-hundred pounds and was so intelligent
if she'd had hands she would have harnessed herself,
intuited the day's work and done her jobs unattended.
I always had the feeling that, though there were other
animals,
cows, chickens, sheep, a pig, there was an absolute equality
between the man, the woman and the horse.

Raymond was tall, angular and bony.
He carried himself upright to his dying day.
He cackled when he laughed and when he told a joke
he always laughed *before* the punchline
so he could be the first.

Ann was slim and quick, full breasts and hips,
and although her face was plain, she was to me
unspeakably beautiful. She wore her white hair
and wrinkled skin the way a summer flower wears its
bloom.

And in her eyes, even at the age of seventy, burnt a fire
so bright and fierce, a passion so intense,
it made me feel old and worn. In her presence
I was sick at the slackness of my life.



Terry Stevenson

II

Every afternoon after dinner Raymond and Ann lay down together on the large sofa in the living room, wrapped themselves around each other and took a nap.

Sometimes they slept, sometimes they only lay in the stillness listening. In summer they listened to the wind and the birds' songs. In winter they listened to the wind and the mute birds—little feet scuttling across the feeder on the windowsill. Often they fell into a half-sleep in which they dreamed waking dreams or they let their minds go still as the room.

They napped like this each day because it was a time when they could come together, these two distinctly separate people, touch each other and be very nearly one being in that place.

They had an unspoken understanding that during these times

they wouldn't talk, but one day Ann said, "You know, we've been more than fifty years, doing the same things day after day, changing only with the seasons and I've never got tired of it, oh, angry and frustrated, plenty, but never tired. I wonder if we ever will."

Raymond chuckled, "Well, we had better get to it if we're going to; we don't have much time left."

They both then saw clearly and briefly the end of their lives and they laughed quietly and held each other.

III

"I was thinking just now," Raymond said, "about that time,

years ago, after we built this place. I could see the two of us lying on the sofa and I remembered clearly how we looked

and what I thought. We were young and new and I held you here

as we are now and I was thinking, I wonder what it will be like

to be here when we're old, the two of us in shrinking bodies

wrapped around each other. I think I knew then, fifty years ago,

pretty clearly what it would be like today. I knew how it would feel. Do you think that means our lives have been too predictable?"

"Why should it?"

"To see that far ahead and then to get to where you saw and look back and see you were right seems so strange, predictable."

"Have you enjoyed it?"

"You know I have."

"I have too."

IV

Toward the end of the Sixties and into the early Seventies every summer there was what Antoine called a "hippy invasion"

around here. Young people from the cities poured into these hills. I remember one spring Antoine saying, "Watch out! boys. Dere really caumin' in dis summer. Dere's gonna be a million of 'em wash in here like a tide wa't. Dis place use' ta be more caows 'an people, naow we're gonna be more hippies 'an caows!"

Raymond and Ann became mentors to them, elders with Confucian knowledge, replacements for the parents the kids had left behind.

Raymond and Ann were visions of another way of life

But the influence went both ways and Raymond took to working in the garden barefooted, then he went shirtless and got a summer tan, then he removed his cap and the traditional bronzed forehead with abrupt demarcation between the sunburn and ashen skull disappeared. It was the talk of the town. What was he doing at seventy-something acting like a kid? It tickled Ann, and what other people said didn't bother her at all. It never had.

One summer afternoon Raymond came in from the garden, approached Ann from behind, put his arms around her middle and kissed the back of her neck. Then his forearms touched her breasts dangling unsupported beneath her shirt. And her shirt was open from the top a few buttons.

"Goodness, what is this?"

"What is what?"

"This." His hands moved to her breasts and held them.

"Well, maybe you shouldn't be thinking you're the only one can learn from hippies. If you go around with half your clothes still on the hook, I guess I can leave half mine in the drawer."

"I guess you can." Raymond rested his chin on her shoulder and gazed down her shirt. "Does it feel good?"

"Sort of strange would be more like it."

"Do you like it?"

"Some."

"Would you go out in public the way you are right now?"

"Raymond Miller, you know I'm not a hussy."

V

They were under the dooryard apple tree at the summer table

Early July, the height of summer, clear and warm and a light breeze to stir things, cool things, an idle day filled with ease, gentle and sweet and a rarity in this ungente place.

A half-dozen days a year like this, no more, the others always with some kind of edge to them, a harshness, which makes it all the more wonder-filled that this place could yield two people such as Ann and Raymond.

At first a dull roar in the distance, then closer and louder until when it passed through the sugarbush just down the road,

it had to it the sound of war. Then they were there:

four of them. Four steel helmets gleaming black, four faces with dark glasses, four faces pale, ashen, as if they had been powdered. In black they came:

black leather jackets, leather pants, leather boots, leather gloves with gauntlets to the elbows and silver rivets

gleaming everywhere, their bikes black and silver too—hoppers, handlebars in the air, seats leaning back—they roared into the lane and toward the house and garden.

The chickens scratching in the dooryard screamed and ran away; Sandy reared and bolted, broke through the fence and disappeared into the woods.

A black they came, into the garden, into the rows of corn,

over tomatoes, down rows of broccoli, through the fence of peas.

They wheeled and turned and came again, through the garden flowers,

over squash and cucumbers, dill and thyme, carrots, potatoes, beans. One rider singled out an errant hen and ran her down.

They came again through the garden, their tires turning and digging the earth, spewing soil and broken plants

into the air. They roared toward the two old people then veered away, down the lane, down the road, over the hill and away.

VI

After supper on a summer evening.

They were sitting in the cool house, she in his easy chair. She looked up at him quizzically; already she had left him,

was in a strange place, alone. He watched the life drain from her face. She said nothing—not even good-bye.

He sat for a time in the growing dusk and stillness.

Then, as the sun headed down behind the mountains, he scooped her into his arms the way you would a child fallen asleep somewhere away from its bed and laid her down

on the sofa where she liked to nap.

He went to the barn and finished chores, then stepped into the evening and felt the cold air spilling down the side-hill all around him. He listened to the crickets, the barred owl and white-throated sparrow,

the wood thrush. Then he came inside and went to bed.

In the first light of morning he dug a grave on the knoll behind the house next to the child's grave, then went to the barn

and built a box of rough pine boards from his store of lumber.

He harnessed Sandy and she drug the box to the knoll and with her help he lowered it into the grave.

He went into the house and picked her up. He wrapped his arms

around her middle and carried her upright, her head rising above

his head because she was stiff.

He put her in the box, put on the lid and nailed it down. He covered her over. He filled in the grave.

He sat down on the freshly mounded earth and began rocking slowly back and forth.

And then he wept.

His tears poured down. He moaned and wailed.

He rolled his head and wept.

He shook his fist at heaven. He rose and paced and wept.

He held his face in his hands. He clawed his pants, tore at his shirt. He stomped the earth and smashed a fist into an open palm. He turned his face toward heaven clinched his teeth and screamed.

When there were no tears left, when he was weak and trembling,

he led Sandy to the barn, unharnessed her, turned her out to pasture and went into the house.

He stood at the window then looking at the mountains and he wept again, this never-ending, accumulated grief for the inevitable.

KHRUSHCHEV IN RETIREMENT

Reflections

When Anastasio Somoza bundled up his parrots and caught a late-night flight to Miami, our status as haven for the huddled masses was secured. The shah (unable to make diplomatic connections) has been waiting for months for a flight in from Mexico, and must, by now, be anxious to catch up with his good friend Richard Nixon in New York.

The American press has made it easy to follow the daily peregrinations of many prominent exiles, but it has taken almost fifteen years for news of the Soviet Union's leading pensioner to reach the West. In the Soviet tradition of scrupulously protecting the privacy of its exiles (whether in Siberia or a suburb of Moscow), Nikita Khrushchev's name was struck from all Soviet newspapers, magazines, and newly printed books within hours after he became Communism's first retired dictator (an honor he enjoyed until his death, of natural causes, in 1971). The government's silence was breached only last year when a samizdat article by the Soviet historian Roy

Medvedev began to circulate in Moscow. Within our own club of retired heads of state growing fast, the news is of special interest.

Medvedev's report, based on interviews with Khrushchev's inner circle and excerpted in the pages that follow, describes a life of surprising homeliness. Unlike Western exiles who travel widely and, invariably, first class, Khrushchev went by foot or rail, and usually only as far as the local collective farm. Protected by his government from such nuisance as invitations to the White House or Oxford University, he found time, at last, to grow tomatoes. Clearly, even in pension plans the gulf between capitalism and Communism is wide.

But if the simpleness of Khrushchev's diversions will seem foreign to the capitalist world, his reported concern for his place in history will not, and great solace will no doubt be derived from Medvedev's reminder that reconciliation with the people is often easier when posthumous.

—H.C.

by
Roy A. Medvedev
translated by
Helen Gredd

AS PREMIER of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev worked fourteen hours a day and had his hand in everything. Scarcely a week would pass without his launching some new reform or reorganization. But the reforms were hasty and prone to failure, and Khrushchev's irritation mounted with each new collapse. He grew increasingly rude and harsh; objections could provoke fits of unbridled fury. His presumption of unlimited power had blurred his perception of reality and diminished his ability to make rational decisions. Yet he continued forward like a tank at full throttle until he was suddenly stopped and cast out of political life by men who had been his obedient assistants and subordinates. Removed to a dacha outside of Moscow, Khrushchev spent the first weeks of his retirement sitting motionless in an armchair. His grandson, when questioned by a schoolmaster about the former premier's activities, reported, "Grandfather cries all the time."

KHRUSHCHEV'S FALL was greeted in the Soviet Union with surprising equanimity, and even relief. Everyone had wearied of the endless reorganizations. Yet his popularity persisted abroad, and visiting officials would sometimes ask to meet with him. When the response that he was too ill to receive visitors began to wear thin, the Presidium [as the Politburo was then called] met to determine the permanent status of the ex-premier. They resolved to install Khrushchev in one of the "distant" dachas that had once belonged to Stalin. In addition, he was to be granted a monthly pension of 1,200 rubles [then about \$1,300], an assortment of privileges, and a guarantee of lifelong government protection. Leonid Brezhnev invited Khrushchev to discuss these "living arrangements" with the Central Committee, but Khrushchev flatly refused to come to Moscow. He chose instead to remain in his dacha near the city on a monthly pension of 400 rubles—the salary of an average business executive.

Roy A. Medvedev lives in Moscow. He is the author of several books, including Let History Judge, a history of Stalinism, and On Socialist Democracy, a critique of the Soviet regime (both published by Alfred A. Knopf). Helen Gredd is an editorial assistant of Harper's.

Khrushchev had also been promised an apartment in Moscow, and since he was fond of long walks, he asked that it be located in the sparsely developed Lenin Hills area. Instead, he was assigned an apartment in one of the densely populated regions of old Moscow.

KHRUSHCHEV SOON CEASED to dream of a return to power, but he continued to lament its loss and to regret many of his past decisions. He was sorry he hadn't rehabilitated more of the victims of Stalin's purges, and he spoke bitterly of those who had advised him to postpone the project for the sake of the party. He regretted the loud ideological campaigns against artists and sculptors that had so severely damaged his reputation at home and abroad; once again he cursed the bad advice that he held responsible for his folly. In time, Khrushchev became more critical of himself, and began to admit to many mistakes made while in power. But such confessions had their limits: to some reproaches he could reply sternly that he had behaved as a Communist must behave, and that he would be a Communist.

AS KHRUSHCHEV BECAME more comfortable with his status as a pensioner, he began to attend concerts and plays. He especially enjoyed the popular Moscow play *Magicians*, and, after the performance, went backstage to meet the author and director. Khrushchev had only one comment: the play's portrayal of the meeting of the Council of People's Commissars had omitted the participation of Kamenev and Bukharin, who had later been purged by Stalin. "We wanted to rehabilitate them, you know," he began—but his criticism of party interference in this endeavor was cut short by his wife's insistent requests that they return home.

OTHER EVENINGS were spent reading, watching television, and, almost invariably, listening to the "Voice of America" and the BBC, through which Khrushchev kept abreast of current events in the Soviet Union. He sympathetically followed the first appearances of the dissident movement; not surprising, since the dissidents' early protests were aimed primarily against attempts to rehabilitate Stalin. He also spoke warmly of Andrei Sakharov, but not so of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. Retirement had finally given Khrushchev time to read Solzhenit-

syn's *First Circle*; he didn't care for it and declared that he would never have allowed its publication. Yet he was untroubled by his earlier assistance in the publication of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*, and he dismissed it by saying, "Maybe I'm crazy, maybe we're all crazy, but surely Tvardovsky wasn't crazy, and he never once said to me that we had a great writer or a great work of art on our hands." This implicit faith in the literary judgment of Alexander Tvardovsky was the result of his position as editor of the journal *Novy Mir* (which Khrushchev now read regularly) and of his talent for producing accessible verse. Khrushchev's interest in culture had increased but his patience hadn't, and Tvardovsky's poems were easy for him to understand and enjoy—unlike, for instance, Pasternak's, which defied Khrushchev's every effort at comprehension.

From early spring to late fall much of Khrushchev's day was spent in his flower and vegetable gardens. He took great pride in his "miracle tomatoes"—each close to a kilogram in weight—and was crushed when a sudden frost killed a large part of the crop. He also became quite taken with the idea of hydroponic gardening and spent hours preparing metal pipes and mixing solutions in his continuing (and sometimes successful) efforts to raise vegetables without soil. He assured his family that hydroponics was the agriculture of tomorrow. But the project grew too expensive and was abandoned. Khrushchev was forced to admit—if only to himself—that hydroponics was more likely the agriculture

"His family shared a joking relief that this fascination with hydroponics had seized Khrushchev at the end of the 1960s rather than ten years earlier."



Sovfoto

Roy A. Medvedev
KHRUSHCHEV
IN
RETIREMENT

of the day after tomorrow. His family shared a joking relief that this fascination with hydroponics had seized Khrushchev at the end of the 1960s rather than ten years earlier.

KHRUSHCHEV'S GUARDS proved willing listeners to his tales of Stalinist tragedies, and his conversations with them were frequent and long. Another source of human fellowship was a nearby vacation resort. Khrushchev would often drop in and talk for hours with the vacationers, who were certain to surround him as soon as he arrived. Their questions were often somewhat pointed, but Khrushchev was an experienced polemicist and didn't take offense. Other frequent stops on his walks were the nearby collective and state farms. On one occasion Khrushchev came across a field that had been poorly tilled, and he sharply reprimanded the supervisor for his indifferent farming methods. The chairman of the collective rudely replied that Khrushchev was no longer in charge of the government, and that it was not his place to meddle in the affairs of others. The unpleasant memory of the incident troubled Khrushchev for a long time.

But his encounters with the neighboring farmers and workers were usually more friendly. One group of visiting collective farmers, upon learning that Khrushchev lived in the neighboring dacha, went up to the wall and, by fashioning a stepstool of sorts, managed to peer through the high fence and catch a glimpse of Khrushchev.

—Are you treated badly here, Nikita? one of the elderly farmers called out.

—No, no, Khrushchev answered.

ON HIS seventy-fifth birthday Khrushchev received an unexpected telephone call from Leon Karpinsky, an editor of *Pravda*. Karpinsky and some friends had begun to reminisce about Khrushchev and had decided to call him. Khrushchev himself answered the telephone, and Karpinsky explained, "We were raised on the Twentieth and Twenty-second Party Congresses, and we will always value your role in the denunciation of Stalin and in the rehabilitation of his victims. I'm certain that these events will ultimately define the meaning of our era and of your activity. And all of us gathered here wish you long life and good health today on your birthday." Khrushchev was touched and delighted—especially since the praise had come from members of a younger generation of Communists. Addition-

al birthday greetings arrived from de Gaulle, Queen Elizabeth, and other foreign heads of state. The Kremlin maintained its usual silence.

THE 1960s in the Soviet Union could be called the "decade of memoirs." Contributions to posterity came from almost every retired military and state official. When Khrushchev asked the Central Committee to assign him a stenographer-typist for the request, not surprisingly, was denied. Nevertheless, the first volume of his memoirs was soon creating excitement in the West and consternation in the Politburo. For the first time since 1964, the Soviet newspapers mentioned Khrushchev: they denounced the memoirs as fraudulent. Khrushchev himself was summoned to the Central Committee and forced to write a brief statement to the effect that he had not arranged the publication of his memoirs. (And, in truth, Khrushchev had been as astonished as the Central Committee to learn of their publication.) However, he categorically refused to deny authorship of them, and when warned by Andrei Kirillenko, his one-time protégé, that he still had much to lose, Khrushchev replied, "Well, you can take away my dacha and my pension, and I'll go around the country with an outstretched hand, and people will surely give me something. But they won't give you anything if you're forced to go with your hand outstretched someday." Khrushchev reportedly left the Kremlin clutching his chest. The next day he suffered his first heart attack, and within months he was dead.

ON SEPTEMBER 13, 1971, *Pravda* carried a brief announcement of the death at age seventy-eight of "the former First Secretary of the Central Committee and special pensioner N.S. Khrushchev." Nothing was said about the time or place of his funeral. He was buried that same day in Novodevichy Cemetery in the presence of his closest relatives and a small circle of friends. On his grave lay a wreath from the Soviet Ministers, but not a single leader of the party or the government attended the hurried ceremonies. The entire area around the cemetery was closed to all but a few diplomats and foreign correspondents. Today, Khrushchev's grave is one of the three, along with those of Lenin and Stalin, most often visited by the Soviet people. Fresh flowers appear almost daily next to his monument in Novodevichy Cemetery. □

'Will Industry Develop Energy-Efficient Technologies?'

Because Union Carbide's business depends on energy, our future growth depends in part on national policies that encourage new energy technologies. Since public attitudes help shape public policies, we commissioned a survey which included this question on industry's role in achieving greater energy efficiency:

"Is it your feeling that American industry will play a major role in developing methods to reduce the amount of energy it takes to produce the average product or do you feel that (it) will play only a minor role in this?"

Major role	65%
Minor role only	27%
Don't know	8%

Source: Survey conducted for Union Carbide by Roger Seasonweir Associates, Inc. May 1979 national probability sample, by telephone, of 1,000 adults.

Two-thirds say industry will play major role.

As the nation seeks ways to conserve energy by using it more efficiently, 2 out of 3 Americans feel U.S. industry will make a major contribution to the effort. Indeed, industry's energy conservation record to date is good, a fact acknowledged by the Department of Energy (DOE). Yet, in a separate question in the same survey, fewer than half the American public believe industry will do the job on its own.

Industry has made real progress.

Increasing energy prices since the early 1970's have given industry strong incentives to save energy—and to develop ways to use it more efficiently. And these incentives have produced results.

- U.S. industry now produces a unit of output with 18% less energy than in 1973.

- Petrochemical companies like Union Carbide have developed plastics and carbon fibers for auto parts to replace heavier materials previously used—making possible lighter-weight cars that use less gas. In 1978, the average new car contained 165 pounds of plastics—produced from less than 1% of overall U.S. petroleum usage. And that amount is expected to reach 350 pounds per car by 1985.
- Union Carbide has developed new energy-efficient technologies: Our new "H-process" produces low-density polyethylene with just one-fourth the energy of previous methods. And our new process for hardening metal parts can save enough natural gas each year to heat all the homes in a town the size of South Bend.
- Under a contract with DOE, Union Carbide has developed a low-cost silicon material for use in photovoltaic cells which convert sunlight into electricity.

Getting on with the job.

With higher costs and potential energy shortages, it is in Union Carbide's interest to continue to create new energy-efficient technologies. The job can be done better and faster by all of us if we answer the President's call to "join together in a great national effort to use American technology to give us energy security"—and if public policies provide positive support for this effort.

An important first step is to allow U.S. energy prices to reach world levels so that America no longer encourages inefficient use of energy resources. Realistic pricing fosters energy conservation and encourages development of both conventional and alternative energy resources.

Union Carbide already produces a pound of product with almost 20 percent less energy than we required in 1972, and by 1985 we are committed to achieving a 30 percent reduction over the 1972 base year. But even with conservation and more efficient energy utilization, our energy bill will still be more than \$2 billion in 1979. The phased decontrol of crude oil prices now underway will clearly increase that amount. While we, like other consumers, don't welcome higher energy bills, we do see realistic energy pricing as a necessary step toward solving the nation's long-term energy problems.

This advertisement is part of a continuing series on public opinions and national concerns.

For more information, write for a complimentary copy of the national survey, "Public Attitudes on Energy." Address: Energy, Union Carbide Corporation, Box H-17, 270 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10017.





THE SURVIVORS CLUB

Rules and regulations

by Matthew Stevenson

Constitution. The club was established to help members find jobs that shape American foreign policy. Whether these positions are sought in government or in its waiting rooms at something like the Brookings Institution is a matter of the applicant's taste. David Aaron, a club member and aide at the National Security Council, said recently: "I chose government because I felt it offered the most opportunity to participate in history."

The club is dedicated to personal advancement; thus the motto: "High visibility, low profile." It is not simply a ring at the inner circles of power or a shadow government, but an association that supplies both groups with men of high caliber, depending on who is President. Throughout the years the club has performed untold national service. Of late, for instance, it stocked the foreign-policy ranks of the Carter government with officials of the Johnson Administration who had spent the intervening years attending to club business.

Membership. Resident members are mostly senior partners in prestigious law firms, investment bankers, and Ivy League academics, and there is an occasional general. They are constantly looking for another job to add to their credentials. Part-time service as trustees, consultants, commentators, and advisers is ideal in this respect. Hence the members lead frenetic lives, between television appearances, high-level meetings, committee hearings, interviews, and briefing sessions, all of which the club sponsors to show off the applicant's talents.

Members build on their accomplishments. Since 1969, when James Schlesinger joined the Nixon Ad-

Matthew Stevenson is an assistant editor of Harper's.

ministration, he has held positions as director of the Atomic Energy Commission, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, and Secretary of Defense. When President Carter appointed him to be Energy Secretary, he was awarded the club prize for exemplary service—the Eliot Richardson Award.

Nonresident Members. Nonresident members are generally persons outside the federal government and the Boston-Washington corridor. They are therefore unable—except when asked at a moment's notice to fly to Washington—to testify before Congress or provide commentary for television on the changing climate of East-West relations. As it is difficult for them to take advantage of the club's job-placement services, they run ads on the op-ed page of the *New York Times*. This enables out-of-town professors to advertise their expertise on the Panama Canal or the Afghanistan question and become known to personnel directors at the State Department. Nonresident members occasionally publish their résumés in the most selective employment directory, *Foreign Affairs*.

Honorary Members. Frequently the public fails to understand events, such as the Vietnam war or the abandonment of Taiwan, in the context of history. The club therefore offers honorary membership to victims of political myopia. This program has enabled Robert McNamara and McGeorge Bundy, to name but two in the category, to continue their public service at the highest levels.

Defense Secretary Harold Brown, himself a bombing pinpointer during the Vietnam war, recently breathed new meaning into the "Hire a Vet" cam-



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(Ed Wolen, Co-owner Nautilus Health Clubs in the Metropolitan Detroit area.)

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gn. He nominated to be the Pentagon's Undersecretary for Policy Robert W. Komer, who ran the John Administration's pacification program from Saigon in the late Sixties—a chore that earned him the nickname Blowtorch.

Election of Members. Members are selected on the basis of presence. This quality counts most in the conduct of foreign relations. To show strength—as much to the Senate as to the Russians—President Carter decided to spend \$30 billion to put missiles on a subway train beneath the deserts of the West. To draw attention to his active concern for those drifting in the South China Sea, Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke was dispatched to Geneva for a conference on refugees.

The club's newest member is the former chairman of IBM, Thomas J. Watson, Jr., who was chosen to be the United States Ambassador to Moscow. The membership committee chose to overlook the antitrust indictment of his former company because his new job would be to project a businesslike figure to the Russians. In spite of some inexperience in international relations, he was given an interview at the time of his nomination. Watson said: "I think it would be very nice for the

United States if all countries of the world would be democratic"). Watson has done a lot of trading with the Soviet Union. IBM sells computers to the Russians, who need them to keep track of "tourists," especially those who write dissident novels and poetry. Understanding the sensitivity of the job, one Senator suggested that it might create the desired impression if Watson were to arrive for the post aboard his private yacht.

Officers. Club officials thrive during crises, which, however, must sometimes be created. The club sponsors tours for members and their spouses to the Middle East or southern Africa, and each year the club invites Andrew Young to give a speech.

Entrance Fees. Members are required to produce, prior to and upon election, books, articles, opinions, and slogans that are consistent with current wisdom. While an academic, resident member Zbigniew Brzezinski, now at the National Security Council, managed to raise the initiation fee by compiling an inventory of opinions that made him a trusted foreign-policy adviser to every major Democratic candidate for Pres-

HOME CLUB MEMBERS



Alexander Haig



Thomas J. Watson, Jr.



Robert McNamara



Henry Kissinger



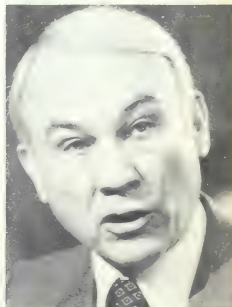
Zbigniew Brzezinski



Cyrus Vance



James Schlesinger



G. William Miller

ident between 1968 and 1976.

Plaques have been put up in the clubhouse to celebrate such immortal phrases as Daniel Moynihan's "standing up to the Third World" or Harlan Cleveland's "revolution of rising expectations." Over the clubhouse door hangs a plaque with the term "counterinsurgency," the password during the Kennedy years.

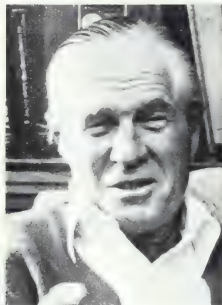
Dues. Each member of the club has an obligation to explain the tragic necessities and the unknown coefficients of his decisions. By-laws require members to state before the appropriate forum—be it an outraged Senator McGovern, the newspapers, hecklers in the crowd, or Mike Wallace from "60 Minutes"—that issues are more complicated than they seem. Members unable to make these payments (e.g., Dean Rusk) are removed from the rolls.

One member in good standing is G. William Miller, former chairman of Textron and the Federal Reserve Bank, who was appointed Secretary of the Treasury—a position now more important abroad than Secretary of State. While Miller was in charge at Textron, sinister forces within the multinational paid a reported \$13 million in bribes to officials of foreign governments. At his Treasury confirmation hearings, Miller confirmed a report by the Securities and Exchange Commission that decided he neither knew of nor authorized the questionable payments. The admissions committee did not deign to ask whether someone who can lose track of \$13 million ought to be Secretary of the Treasury.

INACTIVE MEMBERS



Dean Rusk



George Romney

Manners. The club leadership does not tolerate those who speak their minds. George Romney, in 1968, just before he was to become an officer, let slip that he had been brainwashed about Vietnam and was immediately read from the roster. From the point of view of the rules committee, it would have been better to have accepted the brainwashing and have assumed a position like Secretary of Defense.

Activity. Most members, to stay in condition, either give or attend briefings. The club's many facilities are ideal for such sport, which can add luster to a career. The ideal briefings are those addressed to members of the Administration—preferably a President in seclusion at home or on a mountaintop. Last year Stansfield Turner, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, became the champion briefer with numerous detailed summaries to President Carter on Iran's political stability.

The current club champion is Alexander Haig. In 1969 he was an army colonel. With an incredible string of successful briefings—first as Henry Kissinger's assistant on the National Security Council, then as President Nixon's chief of staff, and finally as commander of NATO—Haig was promoted to four-star general, a rise in rank equivalent to that of Ulysses Grant during the Civil War.

Amateur Nights. On weekends and most evenings the club provides members with meetings to attend. Some of these activities are made possible by reciprocal arrangements with the Council on Foreign Relations and the Aspen Institute. Both provide numerous workshops on arms control and human rights. Junior members moderate the panel discussions.

Travel to meetings is dictated by rank. Senior members, like Secretary of State Vance, fly jets or helicopters to summit meetings; limousines await them at the airport. Junior members also fly jets, but mostly to the Midwest for conferences on the interface between science and humanism in Africa. On slow days they shuttle between New York and Washington.

Reports of Meetings. Minutes are too important to be left to the stenographers. Each member acts as his own recording secretary and produces his own version of the proceedings. To clarify the record after each epoch of foreign policy, strategists often write their memoirs, much as corporations provide shareholders with annual reports.

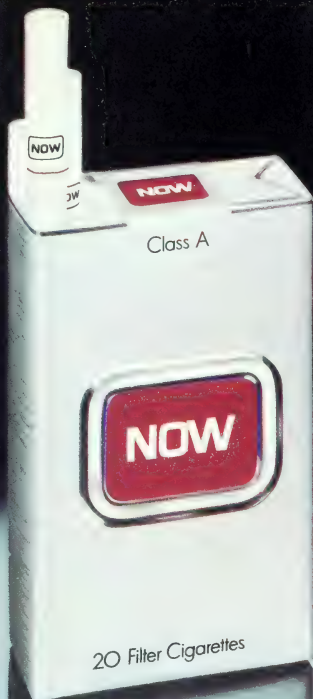
Reading the accounts of politicians involved with the Vietnam war—like Leslie Gelb's *The Irony of Vietnam: The System Worked*—one gets the impression that those responsible for sending soldiers into troubled lands and bombers over neutral countries never set foot in the White House or for that matter Washington. In fact, it is refreshing to discover almost universal opposition to the war in leaders once thought to have led the less than successful outing.

Even Richard Nixon finally learned that memoirs do a far more effective job of clouding events than do erased tapes. In a friendly gesture of competition, however, Henry Kissinger is attempting to trump Nixon's bid for the final word. The former National Security Adviser has entitled his recollections *White House Years*, thus leaving it to future club historians to figure out whose office was oval and whose was the basement.

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RAGS & BONES

A short story

by Nadine Gordimer

A WOMAN named Beryl Fels recently picked up an old tin chest in a junk shop. When she got it home to her flat she found it contained letters.

She telephoned friends and had something more amusing to exchange than news of business trips and children's colds. "What do you do with other people's letters?" "Take them back"—but that was a stupid answer. Back where? The old man who ran the shop wouldn't know to whom they belonged; these rag-and-bone men wouldn't tell a buyer, ever, where they found the things they scavenged from house sales, pawnshops, and people more in need of money than of possessions whose associations they either did not know or no longer cared about.

"Read them. Oh, of course, read them." The antiquarian bookdealer was at once in character; he was good fun, this permanently young man of forty-five, homosexual and bibliophile. He and Beryl Fels went to the theater and avant-garde films together, a plausible if inauthentic couple.

"Burn them, I suppose—what else could one do?"—the lying rectitude of a most devious woman, who eavesdropped on her adolescent children's telephone conversations.

"What did you want a tin chest for?"—this from someone who had no leisure to spend Saturday mornings pottering about among bric-a-brac and making trips across town to some special shop where one could buy a particular cheese or discover a good inexpensive wine not easy to get.

Beryl Fels had thought the chest would be the thing to hold spare keys, fuse wire, picture

hooks. Living without a man, she was as efficient as any male about household maintenance, no trouble at all to her, although her hands were creamed and manicured, as perfectly inutile-looking as any man with an idea of femininity could have wished for. She had been on the lookout for something that would clear from her lovely yellow-wood desk (another Saturday morning find) a miscellany that didn't belong there.

Some of the letters were banded together and probably all had been, once. All were addressed to the same name, a woman's, and a box number in one town, or *poste restante* in other towns and even, she saw, in other countries. She had not thought of the chest as a receptacle for letters. But of course if one were to have so many letters to keep! She counted: 307 letters and 9 postcards. And telegrams, many telegrams, some stuffed in their original orange, window envelopes. There is something queer about preserving telegrams, she held them: at once urgent and old, the don't keep. She read one; telegrams are hardly private, the words counted out by a post office clerk under the public eye. It was terse and unsigned, a date, a time, a railway station platform number, a cryptic addition whose message was not very difficult to guess. Yes yes yes. A lover's affirmation. What can 307 letters be but love letters? And it seemed that probably the person they belonged to had not put them in the chest—some were wadded as if they had lain pushed behind heavy objects. Someone had found them, perhaps, and tossed them into the tin chest that the woman to whom they had been written didn't own. Beryl

Nadine Gordimer is a South African writer whose most recent novel, *Burger's Daughter*, was published last month by Viking.

s saw, as she tipped them all out, that they
l been thrown in carelessly in reverse or-
; the top of the pile was at the bottom of
chest, and there was the very sheet of
per (the old foolscap size) with the instruc-
n that would have met the eye of anyone
opening the drawer or lifting the lid of the
ce where the letters originally would have
n kept. *These letters and documents are to
preserved unread until twenty years after
date of my death, and then are to be pre-
ted to an appropriate library or archives.*
e signature was the name on the envelopes.
e postmarks—the letters were not in chro-
logical order anymore, so one would have
go through the lot to see how long the af-
r had lasted—were from the late 1940s
hich explained why the telegram she'd read
ve a railway station platform number rather
an a flight number). If the woman had died
n, the embargo was lapsed. If she were
all alive, she certainly would have destroyed

her letters rather than let them out of her
hands.

BERYL FELS began to read while she
drank her coffee late on Sunday morning. She
did not get out of her dressing gown or make
her bed or tend her balcony herb garden to the
sound of Mozart or punk rock (she was inter-
ested in everything that was a craze or passion
in other people's lives), as she usually did on
Sundays. She had had two invitations to lunch
at the homes of couples, one hetero- the other
homosexual, options she had left open to her-
self if a preferable third—she was a free agent
—did not turn up, but she did not go out and
ate no lunch. At times, while she read, her heart
made itself heard in her ears like a sound from
someone moving about in the flat. The tendons
behind her knees were tense and her long-

**“... she was
interested in
everything that
was a craze or
passion in
other people's
lives...”**



Patty Dryden

nailed forefinger stroked the wings of her nose, which felt warm and greasy. The woman to whom the letters were written was not just anybody; the man who wrote them was her confidant and critic as well as her lover. He wrote most passionately when he had just had the experience of hearing her praised by people who did not know he knew her. He wanted terribly to make love to her, he said, when he saw her up there on the platform giving a lecture, with her glasses hiding her eyes from everybody. He felt himself swelling when he saw her name in print. Whole long letters analyzed the behavior of people who would, he felt, do this rather than that, express themselves in these words and gestures rather than those, were "there" or "simply *not there*." It became clear these were characters in a novel or play: she was a writer.

And he—he seemed to have been a scientist of some sort, engaged in research. It was difficult, without having access to her letters to him, to discover what exactly it was he hoped to achieve, what it was that he was climbing toward over the years the letters covered. There was the impression that the specialized nature of his work was something his mistress did not have the type of intellect or education to follow, despite her brilliance, attested to in every letter, and her success, which was as strong an erotic stimulus as whatever beauty she might have had, ("... against that field of female cabbages your face was stamped out like a fern"—he strained to be literary, too.) But that she was ambitious for him, that she jealously bristled when others received promotions, awards, honors that he was in the running for, was plain from the passages in his letters calming her with his more stoic, cynical view of talents and rewards in his field. To her he unburdened himself scatologically of all the malice he felt—*he and she* felt—toward those who advanced themselves by means he certainly wouldn't stoop to. She also consoled; he found endearing—and did not deny, since no doubt he knew his worth—her assurances that whatever small kudos others might pick up on the way, he would get one of the Nobel Prizes one day.

At some stage he did receive some signal honor for his work; as a lover he took what evidently must have been her stern triumphant pride as a new and particularly voluptuous kind of caress between them; and at the same time he was concealing from himself, in order to enjoy the triumph unalloyed, the knowledge that she was not fitted to judge the scale of such achievements or the significance of such honors. This last came out in certain small, embarrassed phrases, or half-sentences scored

over but not made illegible (as if he could bear to have secrets from her, not even though he was concealing for both of them). The stranger, reading, took up the pathetic cunning of these phrases and half-remarks, whereas between the distinguished man writing them and the distinguished woman to whom they were addressed the grit of doubt would be enveloped in emotion and mutual self-esteem—the lubrication of the eye coats tiny foreign bodies and prevents them from irritating the eyeball.

The distinguished woman schemed to attend the ceremony at which her lover was to be honored; letters covering the wrangling of whole months between them first persuaded, then finally implored her to give up the idea. "Even if you could approach Faragar through Ebe Stein, how can he not smell a rat? A bedroom rat, quite frankly, my love. Only members of the Society and their wives will be present. The press! They don't come to things like this. It's not exactly a world-shaking event. They get a handout, perhaps, with the list of awards afterward. And since when have you been known as a journalist? Why on earth should you suddenly express great interest in the proceedings of the Society? You'd be recognized at once by someone who's seen your photograph on your books, for God's sake! Someone would start sniffing around for a connection, the reason for your being there. And how could we *not* look at each other? You know it's impossible. You're not just anybody, even if you sometimes want to be." And in answer to what must have been resentful disappointment: "There are some things we can't have. As you often say, we have so much; more than other people can even dream of, I'm superstitious to spell it out, not only 'us,' our great joy in each other's bodies and friendship, but success and real achievement—certainly you, my darling, I am well aware, quite objectively, you are one of the great names coming. . . . If we don't suffer the attrition of farmyard domesticity, then we can't have the sort of public display of participation in each other's achievements married couples have—and most of the time it's all they do have. Why should you want to sit like some faculty wife (like mine, whose husband doesn't want to sleep with her and can't talk to her anymore) wearing an appropriate smile for the occasion, as she does a hat. . . ."

Again, she must have wanted to dedicate a book to him. He tormentedly regretted he must forgo this. "No matter how you juggle initials or code names known only to us, you give away our private world. You acknowledge its existence, to others. Let's keep it as we've

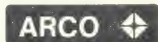
Marvin Hamlisch, Tony, Oscar and Grammy winning composer, will be the first artist to be featured on Camera Three as it moves from CBS to prime time on the Public Broadcasting Service. The award-rich cultural series will be seen on most PBS stations every Thursday at 9:30 p.m., starting on October 4

New programs, of which the Hamlisch profile is the first, will be produced by Camera Three Productions. WGBH, Boston, will also produce some of them. Most of the programs in this series were originally produced for and broadcast on the CBS television network and were made available to public television stations without charge.

The move of Camera Three to PBS is being made possible by grants from The National Endowment for the Arts and Atlantic Richfield Company.

We commend it to your attention.

**Spend some
prime time with
Marvin Hamlisch.**



managed to do for nearly five years. Separately, we are both people in the public eye, it's the price or the reward, God knows, of what we both happen to be. Let the media scabble and speculate over those. I know that book is mine; and it is my posterity."

AT FIVE in the afternoon Beryl Fels read the last letter. It was not one of the momentous ones—reflected no crisis—nor was it the type of note, strangled terse with erotic excitement, that immediately preceded planned meetings. He was writing while eating a sandwich at his desk; he was thinking about his damned lecture for the Hong Kong conference; he'd read only five pages (this must refer to some piece of her work she had given him) but could not wait to tell her how moving in a new way and at the same time witty... hence the scribble....

Beryl Fels stood up. Belches kept rising from her empty stomach. Outlines in the room jumped. Thirteen cigarette stubs—she counted dully—in the ashtray. The dazedness came from the change of focus for her eyes: there were her other "finds" around her, to establish the equilibrium of her own existence. She gazed at her beautiful yellow-wood desk, subdued in its presence as if, entering into the past of other lives, she had dislodged the order of her own and retrogressed to the shallow-breathing stillness of being caught out, brought back to the angles and polished surfaces of the headmistress's study from blurred, fearful pleasures in an overgrown corner of a garden. She put her hands to her nose, the child sniffing the secret odor on the fingers.

Running a bath, making her neglected bed, and choosing one of her silk shirts to wear with trousers provided the routine (she often bathed and changed at this time of day, just home from work) that accomplished the shift from the experience of reading the letters to an interpretation appropriate to her well-arranged life. Like the other finds—the desk perfectly at home between balcony door and lyre-backed chair—this one found its place. It became one of her interests and diversions as a lively personality. A pity the day was Sunday: she could have telephoned the public library to ask if they had any of the woman's books. She could have gone down at once herself, to read up about her. Perhaps the identity of the man was known, to people more widely read than she was. If not, the letters might be even more important—a discovery, even a literary sensa-

tion, as well as a find. She telephoned the antiquarian bookdealer friend again and again, but of course he would always be at some party. On Sunday evening, he was asked everywhere. Having overcome an unusual (for her) reluctance to talk to anybody—it just showed how one needs to get out and among people, how quickly solitude takes hold—Beryl Fels impatiently awaited Monday morning.

IN THE WEEK that followed, she asked the antiquarian bookdealer friend and the college librarians at the public library and a university library (both acquaintances) about the woman writer. None of these had heard of her. Each was cautious to say so; each uneasy, unless this pat ignorance should prove to be a professional lapse, the name that of some generic but important writers' writer he should have known. But library catalogues revealed that not a single book by anyone of that name was on the shelves or even in the store, in morgue stacks from which books no longer in general demand were taken out for borrowing on special request. The antiquarian bookdealer did dig up, in some old publisher's catalogue, the title of one book by the woman thirty years out of print. The title rang no bell for anyone.

Determinedly, so good at tracking down things she wanted, Beryl Fels got someone to introduce her to a professor in the science faculty at the university. She did not show him her find but jotted down for him all the facts gleaned from the letters that could lead to identification of the other personality who made up the pair of distinguished lovers. There was no one, no one at all fitting the given period, field of activity (quickly established as geophysics), and country of origin whose name was sufficiently original or important for a name to be known. There was certainly one, in the list of Nobel Prize winners for science, who could have been or could be him—should he still be alive.

The antiquarian bookdealer said she should keep the letters anyway. "Beryl darling, for our grandchildren—if any." He was conducting one of the unruly lunches expected at the table, and timed the laugh, pausing not a second too long. "Even letters written by ordinary people become salable if you wait fifty years or so. Like old seaside postcards. Laundry lists. Don't I know? How else could I afford to give you all such a good meal? People will collect anything."

DEGENERATE CRITICISM

The dismal state of English studies

by Peter Shaw

THE FAILED cultural revolution of the 1960s proved remarkably successful in its assault on the university, and especially on the humanities. The contempt for learning and authority that marked the Sixties so firmly rooted itself in the thinking of academics that they have become its agents. In the meantime, a new attack, this one directed against intellectual discourse itself, is now being conducted by a group of critics deeply influenced by contemporary French philosophers. This time, academics in the humanities have not only reacted. Practitioners of the new literary critical movement in question are divided over its precise definition, as well as over what it should be used for. "Revisionist criticism" has been suggested, and also the French-derived term "deconstructivism."

From different points of view and following various logics, practitioners of revisionist criticism—Harold Bloom and his Yale colleagues Geoffrey Hartman, J. Hillis Miller, Paul de Man, and Jacques Derrida are among the best-known proponents—all manage to lead into question the common assumption that language is a dependable means of communication. They attempt to show that both literature and criticism are inevitably rife with ambiguities. Given the tendency of the reader or listener to confuse his own

prejudices with the message being sent, they argue that all uses of words prove to be no less uncertain than the most abstruse poetry.

The tenuousness of language to which these critics refer has always been appreciated. What is being claimed for the first time, though, is that we must give up any illusion that we can gain a clear understanding of the written word. The paradoxes of communication, formerly regarded as challenges to the wits of writer and reader, are now considered primary, absolute bars to any degree of certainty whatsoever.

It follows from these new propositions that the moral attitude of a given work of fiction can in no case be made clear, least of all through the kind of explicit assertion favored by the champion of traditional values in fiction, John Gardner. His vigorous unequivocalness becomes by definition no less ambiguous than any other statements about meaning and morality. The issue compromising academic criticism today is simply whether it is possible to mean what one says and to convey that meaning to others. Anyone wishing to answer in the affirmative must begin by confronting the new language of indeterminism.

This language, as it develops, has surprising similarities to that currently spoken by instructors in college

classrooms throughout the United States. Here, too, certainty and piety of all kinds are systematically undermined in favor of a universal relativism of values and judgment. Just as the revisionists are led to reduce the act of criticism to a given critic's subjective preference, so do professors relegate judgment of all sorts to the students' subjective preferences. The approach is akin to positing as truth one's responses on the psychologists' Thematic Apperception Test.

College professors thus share a skepticism about art and knowledge, the intellect and culture, not only with revisionist critics but with anti-intellectuals outside academe as well. In the end, nothing makes any sense; everything is relative, anyway; one man's opinion is as good as another's; moral distinctions are useless. They all reduce to power and desire—to my own opinion, the way I feel, what seems right to me.

The diverse adherents of this philosophy, whether they be anti-intellectuals, revisionist critics, or professors at colleges and universities prestigious and obscure, are part of the same descent into solipsism.

Peter Shaw is an associate professor of English at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and the author of The Character of John Adams, recently published in paperback by W. W. Norton.

Two new books give witness to the seductions of an unwitting academy by the assumptions of indeterminism over the past twenty years. In *Literature Against Itself: Literary Ideas in Modern Society*,* the critic Gerald Graff analyzes the "deconstruction" of literary discourse by revisionist theoreticians. In *New Readings vs. Old Plays*** Richard Levin exposes the fatuities of conventional academic criticism in an analysis that makes one begin to understand the decline of the university.

AS IN ANY SUBJECT, a certain amount of nonsense has always been evident in Richard Levin's field of English Renaissance drama and Shakespearean studies. The excesses have been exposed and parodied, especially where they resemble practices in other areas of English studies. More than one critic, for example, has laughed over the academic tendency to treat fictional characters as "Christ figures." Inevitably, any wound suffered in a book will be likened by some commentator to the crucifixion. A fictional character who is going to die, moreover, had better not eat anything before his demise lest his act be identified as an allusion to the Last Supper. This sort of foolishness, which is more common than one might suppose, is ordinarily treated as an "abuse" of critical method, and not as an indictment of it. But Levin demonstrates that "abuses" of this sort are persistent in his field, that they are systematic, and that to a significant extent they have become the basis of thinking about Shakespeare and his era.

Had Levin set out to discredit English studies in general, he could not have chosen a more representative corner of the discipline. For Shakespearean criticism has always included in itself the major issues of critical method.

Levin shows that Renaissance literary interpretation has resolved itself into three formulaic approaches. The first concentrates on the themes of plays, the second searches for ironies, and the third, which pretends to be

historical, reinterprets according to what Elizabethan and Jacobean audiences are supposed to have felt and believed. Critics who adopt one or more of these approaches come to believe that the one thing a play does not mean is what it appears to mean. Nevertheless, despite the failure of all previous interpreters to recognize this fact, the new academic readings prove always to be successful, and to render superfluous all previous understandings of the play, character, or scene under examination. In one article after another in the most prestigious academic journals, the shared experiences of audiences and readers for some 300 years are regularly overthrown. How such startling developments can have been taking place for the past twenty years without being reported in the press, let alone making news in the academic world, is a question in itself, and one that I will return to.

In the academic criticism of old plays the most popular themes seem to be love, corruption, honor, and especially "Time." Pairs of themes are still more common, with the list being led by order and disorder, love and war, art versus nature, reason and imagination, and the most popular of all, appearance and reality. To be sure, the thematic importance of Hamlet's words "I know not 'seems'" in the first act of the play is undeniable. With this remark Hamlet initiates a series of variations on the riddle or theme of appearance and reality. Is there really a ghost? Is he trustworthy? How best deal with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern's deceptive sycophancy? And how take the traveling actors' false yet true imitation of emotion?

However, just as the deceitfulness of language is exaggerated into metaphysics by the revisionists, so the Renaissance specialists elevate themes into systems of infinite complexity. Ranging among the themes with unaccountable ease, the critics affirm that they have been able to identify and explain complexities completely different from anything their predecessors or even their contemporaries have ever suspected. One, commenting on rival interpretations of *Troilus and Cressida* not long ago, explained that "the play, as I read it, is not 'about' love and war, or love and honor, or policy and emotion.... Rather it deals with the single problem of corruption and its causes." Soon

afterward this critic was dismissed, another, who confidently identified "Time" as the inconclusive theme of the play. That critic was then superseded by yet another, who reinstated "the corruptive spirit."

This sort of sterile formulation in literature made a plausible cause for despair for the English professor Henry in Simon Gray's play of the same name a few years ago. As Butley recalled the titles of his students' papers—"Hate and Redemption, Pity and Terror, Sin and Salvation"—he grew comically but seriously outraged and depressed (over the profession, not the students). One might argue in favor of the approach to literature so depressing to Butley that the proliferation of thematic formulas is evidence of a lively academic debate, but nothing could be further from the truth. Debate presumes the possibility of agreement, whereas the thematists have not the slightest interest in arriving at either truth or consensus. Instead, their practice depends on a constant, endless, and total disagreement over the identity of the themes in any given play.

The disagreements among thematists thus quite definitively undermine any claim they might have to be taken seriously. From another point of view, though, their excesses deserve recognition for the light they throw on the present state of literary studies, both in the academic journals and in the classroom.

And so it is important to note, after all, that the readers of a respectable scholarly journal* have been warned against the "misleading impression" that *Othello* "is about jealousy." At that one critic is barely willing to admit that the same play significantly concerns Othello and Desdemona. "Since I see the unresolvable appearance-reality dualism as the center of the *Othello* design, I regard Emilia Iago as the play's central relationship. Such readings are regularly applied throughout English Renaissance drama. Levin's other categories of dramatic criticism—the ironic and the historical—yield equally fatuous absurdities.

*I cannot be more specific. Levin, as means of avoiding the charge that his comments are motivated by antipathy to particular critics, has taken the unusual step of omitting page references. His sources are listed not by citation but alphabetically by chapter.

* Published by the University of Chicago Press; 272 pages, \$15.

** Subtitled "Recent Trends in the Reinterpretation of English Renaissance Drama." Published by the University of Chicago Press; 278 pages, \$19.

r the ironist, virtually all heroes
 lawed and all happy endings false.
 let, for example, is "a soul lost
 lammable error... a serpent-like
 rge... a profane fool." The mar-
 scene at the end of the comedy
idsummer Night's Dream conveys
 hastily reminder" of death—that is
 e have read the sources and know
 one of the marriages is reported
 end to have produced a child who
 died. "Historical" critics reveal
 the secret meaning of a given play
 in its having been composed for
 ecial occasion—usually a supposed
 ornamance before King James. With
 key it can be shown that certain
 racters actually represent the king,
 that commonsense understandings
 he dialogue miss a host of esoteric
 rrences to the king's writings and
 s. In fact, there is absolutely no evi-
 ce for these "occasionalist" claims,
 ch recall the semi-mystical maun-
 ings of the anti-Stratfordians—that
 stic fringe of readers who assert
 Shakespeare of Stratford is not the
 nor of the plays.

it is difficult to say which is harder
 believe: that the claims of historical
 isionalism can actually have been
 lished, or that their significance,
 ch would be spectacular if true, has
 e largely unnoticed. In fact, as with
 attempts to assimilate one charac-
 after another to the Christ image,
 umber of scholars have attacked oc-
 onalism. But for the most part,
 g with thematism and ironism, it
 inues to reign triumphant.

F SOMEONE WERE to take the un-
 precedented step of reading the
 criticism of the past twenty years
 with a view to gaining a perspec-
 on, say, *Romeo and Juliet*, what
 ld be the result? That the pair
 ld be exposed as anything but star-
 sed lovers may be easily guessed
 advance. But this is not all. One
 ld learn that Romeo, who never
 eves "true love" according to Saint
 l's definition, something he should
 e done, "took up the purchase of
 al drugs (which ultimately caused
 own death)." Romeo, in fact, is
 se to a mass murderer." In the
 racter of Juliet, "perversion" and
 "rawness" of "sexual hunger" pre-
 . (In this she resembles Othello's
 demona, who according to another

critic "shrinks from the reality of the
 whore within her.") An unnatural, in-
 decent, sinful girl, Juliet must be con-
 demned along with Romeo for the blas-
 phemy of committing suicide. In the
 end, the study of "history" teaches us
 that "the average audience of *Romeo*
and Juliet would have regarded the be-
 havior of the young lovers as deserv-
 ing everything they got."

The vulgarity of this conclusion,
 along with its fractured grammar, may
 give the impression that such opinions

as it typifies are uncommon exceptions
 —the work of obscure hacks in the
 profession. While either of these ex-
 planations may apply in this particular
 example, however, the abuses gathered
 by Levin have been committed by crit-
 ics at every level of competence and
 reputation. Moreover, while they have
 been ignored in general, such readings
 have gained respectability and even
 fame within the specialty of Renais-
 sance and Shakespearean criticism.
 Clearly, the entire profession bears re-

LibertyPress LibertyClassics

Can Capitalism Survive?

By Benjamin A. Rogge

Penetrating, witty, and wise prescriptions
 for our day, by the Distinguished Professor
 of Political Economy at Wabash College.
 Rogge explores the prospects for capitalism,
 the philosophy of freedom, the nature of
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sponsibility for creating an atmosphere that has permitted such work to establish itself.*

But let us return to the idea of seriously attempting to synthesize the new academic readings in order to learn something about a particular play, and to the related mystery of why their startling newness has never been reported to the world. By now it must be apparent that the explanation in both cases is that for the most part this criticism is simply not read—and with good reason. It is ignored not only by newspaper reporters, but also by cultivated readers, by professors of English, and even by Renaissance and Shakespearean specialists, including thematists, ironists, and occasionalists themselves.

*The articles cited by Levin have appeared not only in the standard journals within his specialty—*Renaissance Drama*, *Renaissance Quarterly*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, *Shakespeare Studies*, *Shakespeare Survey*—but also in prestigious journals outside it: *English Literary History*, *Journal of English and German Philology*, *Modern Philology*. In many instances, the articles have been anthologized in texts that are presented to students as models of criticism.

The same lack of interest in criticism prevails not just in Renaissance scholarship but throughout the profession. Although surveys like Levin's remain to be written on the other specialties within English studies, evidence of what would be uncovered is suggested whenever an academic bewails the so-called publish-or-perish imperative and the proliferation of publications that it breeds. "It is impossible to keep up with work in the field," the professional journals repeatedly declare. Either because academic criticism cannot be read, then, or because no one wishes to read it, professionals in the field, by their own admission, do not keep up with its progress. How, then, have they muddled through? Very simply by ignoring their peers, while remaining secure in the knowledge that by doing so they miss nothing of importance.

Levin believes that a tendency to debunk is built into each of the approaches that he has anatomized. But the devaluation of values that they share can as easily be seen as part of a wider phenomenon: the erosion of certainty about what is true and right. It is significant, for example, that an

article (not mentioned by Levin) have been published with the title *Defense of Goneril and Regan*." is its sympathy for two of literature's most despicable villains the worst ample of academic wrong-headedness on record. Renaissance criticism strayed so far from ordinary human impulses that most of it would have led one to suspect that characters, tions, and feelings have anything whatsoever to do with the theater. Characters are made into the vehicles of ideas when they speak it is to "debate" and "discuss" the abstractions that are then to be the real business of the play. Marriages are "symbolic," and tragic endings convey no pain, even to the protagonists.

Students introduced to this universe learn to adopt the attitude toward of their professors. They come to literary talk, that is, as a rarefied course that does not have to be tested against ordinary experience. Yet it does not necessarily insulate them from either the cynicism or the nihilism of their professors' critical dogma. Its covert assumptions reach students more surely than explicit philosophies. Academic criticism starts with the assumption that there are no such things as admirable human beings, unequally admirable acts, or truly pure motives for acts. To prove that they do not exist, every conceivable method of questioning motives is employed. (Here the assumption taught is that the end justifies the means.) As Levin shows, the close analysis of character has resolved itself into the use of "character assassination," guilt by association and innuendo. In view of the debased morality it would on the whole seem safest to keep one's college-age children away from the intellectual influence of most English professors.

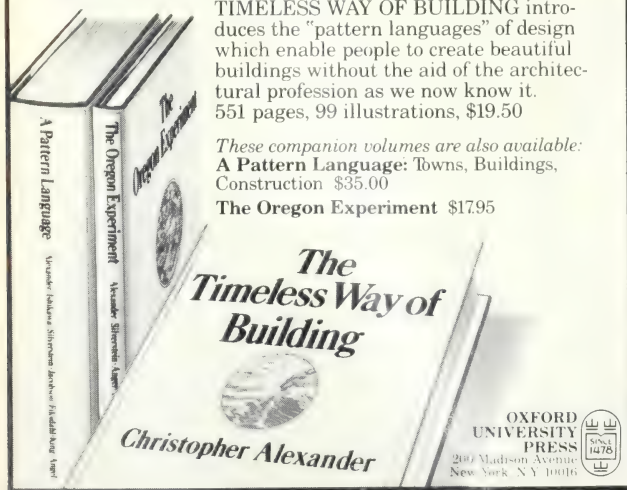
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IN RETROSPECT, the rise of literary revisionism may be taken as a reaction to the bankruptcy of conventional academic criticism. But revisionism arrives not as a cure, but as a consequence: a kind of *reductio ad absurdum*. The revisionists have presented themselves as opponents of the Establishment, while in turn being rejected by most academics. Nevertheless, the systematic dismissal of common sense by conventional critics and the programmatic uncertainty of revisionism

ists have much in common. As long as the 1950s, when some critics in to have misgivings about the readings discussed by Levin, the complaint was raised that "misreading" were becoming the norm. Simply, in revisionist criticism the first sequence of calling discourse itself a question is the proposition that criticism amounts to misreading, thus one reading is as legitimate as another.

relying upon this apparently inescapable conclusion with an infectious ache, Harold Bloom elevated it into a guiding principle of revisionist criticism in the early 1970s, but he was giving a local habitation—Yale—a name—his own—to what had already become standard academic practice. Here it was, then, that the quiet line of academic criticism reached its logical dead end. For as Bloom and others claimed, since misreading is inalienable, the best critics will be those who voluntarily admit their fallibility, embracing misreading as their starting-point, they will be liberated from the constraints formerly imposed on critics by their naive faith in the possibility of achieving objectivity. Not only is certainty unattainable, but the very virtue lies in abandoning the attempt to achieve it.

certain glamour has attached itself to the revisionist enterprise insofar as it represents the latest literary insurgency. On the other hand, it was begun by middle-aged academics whose style and manner are nothing if not magisterial. As a result the charges leveled against opponents—of self-indulgent subjectivism, of thesis-ridden obscurity, of a supposedly evasive use of terminology, of an attempt to supplant the art by shifting attention to the drama of one's own thought—are commonly viewed with a patronizing air. And of course if one makes the mistake of arguing that the revisionist is in error, he need only respond that the charge is quite correct, since that is exactly what he had in mind.

The tone of debate over the issues was caught a year ago by a student reviewer for the Columbia University *Lecturer* when he described "a blissing but dignified debate on the nature of modern literary criticism which featured leading experts in the field extending on such topics as 'perceptual structures,' 'semantic gestalt,' 'undecid-

able significations,' and 'evolving sequences of false surmises.'" The revisionist tone must be infectious, for the anti-revisionist, humanist critic M. H. Abrams was reported to have "called for a return to 'traditional hermeneutical' readings through which interpretation would rest on 'certain consensual regularities' rather than with 'the text as such.'"

Theoretically, there can be no refutation of the utter skepticism that underlies revisionism. The literary theorist Wayne C. Booth makes this point in *Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism*, his new book on literary disagreement.* In the face of radical skepticism, he writes, we must retreat and admit that our confidence in making sense and communicating it to one another is based on faith. But luckily, he adds, few pursue the challenge. Gerald Graff, in contrast, has recognized that revisionist criticism offers exactly such a challenge, and he has attempted to meet it. Graff shows first of all that in practice, revisionism adopts a facile metaphysics. Its practitioners keep showing that because art, like criticism, cannot know its object (the world), all fictions are essentially about nothing more than themselves. But this conclusion always proceeds from an unargued certainty about the futility of knowing, and so degenerates into a new kind of critical cant.

But revisionists do assume that they know the nature of literature: they are certain that it is reflexive. When they proclaim that the novel is "a self-consciously fictive construction," they are themselves assuming knowledge of a certain version of reality, albeit a putatively confusing one; and when they assert that the novel reflects the world's unknowableness they are actually positioning the oldest literary theory of all: Aristotle's mimesis, or imitation. As it turns out, then, they both know reality and believe that literature imitates it, so that they live with a more serene confidence about the way things are than most people do.

To prove that the revisionists believe in reality and certainty despite their disclaimers hardly begins to meet their challenge. For theirs is not merely an academic tendency, but rather a movement with political sources and

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
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This time, with somewhat greater subtlety, writers were urged to depict the lives of America's downtrodden and of its minorities. Such subjects as these were assumed to harbor an oblique summons to action. But in the 1960s, as in the 1930s, literary radicals continued to separate themselves from their opponents by championing realism. Realistic literature showed life as it is, and so provided the basis for political action. Other literary forms, such as idealism and fantasy, made such action less likely by distorting reality. In the radical formula, to depart from reality was to serve the ruling class.

Through revisionist criticism the cultural radicals of the 1970s have completely reversed the assumptions and program set forth in the 1960s. The revisionists begin and end by dismissing social reality. It is, they argue, nothing but an artificial category. For them, reality in literature serves rather than threatens the powers that be. Depicted in literature, "bourgeois reality" makes life as it is appear inevitable and unchangeable, thereby encouraging acquiescence to the capitalist status quo so that it functions as a mechanism of political control. It follows that the revolutionary act lies not in practicing socialist realism but rather in deconstructing reality according to the revisionist formula.

As in traditional radical politics, this new "politics of anti-realism," as Graff terms it, assigns revolutionary tasks to art and criticism. "By refusing to hold a mirror up to nature, by exploding the very idea of a stable 'nature,' art

strikes at the psychological and epistemological bases of the ruling order. In cooperation with art, Graff's analysis continues, "criticism ought to plode the professional academic model of 'the work itself,' the 'intention' of the author, and the determinate nature of textual meaning."

WHILE THIS NEW PROGRAM is far more sophisticated than those that it replaced, its complete turn about with regard to objectivity and reality has not been accomplished without a sacrifice of logic. For the practice of deconstruction in criticism has no actual connection with the political revolution that it superficially imitates. Having abandoned a reliable definition of reality, those who wish to change the present organization of society have left themselves with no ground to stand on. They are as doomed to inconsequence, one might say, as their predecessors of the 1960s were with the politics of symbolic protest in the streets. And yet Graff has not sufficiently taken into account the success of the 1960s' cultural politics. Despite its failure to achieve a revolution, the politics nevertheless effected wide-reaching changes in sensibility. Similarly, while the present assault on reality may also fail politically, its subversion of common sense and discourse cannot easily be dismissed.

From this point of view, the critiques offered by both Graff and Levin, though well taken, are inadequate. Graff calls for the championing of objectivity and reality. Levin advocates more stringent peer review of scholarly articles and a return to historic criticism, proposals that mandate information instead of speculation. But the fact that a consensus about the nature of history and reality can have been abandoned in the first place argues against the likelihood of its being restored.

It is hardly reassuring to witness Levin's being repeatedly forced to the necessity of pointing out that if Shakespeare and his contemporaries did not mean what they seem to be saying, there was nothing to prevent them from making themselves clear to their audiences. As for Graff, once he has had to point out that "the very notions of understanding, definition, explanation

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THE MALAISE within English studies, like the university's other complaints, has been described as a temporary crisis in the evolution of a venerable and necessary institution. Yet it should be remembered that both the university and its departments have not always thrived, and that during their tenure they have not always served as indispensable channels for the flow of the cultural stream. Less than a hundred years ago, English studies hardly existed. Moreover, when they replaced classical studies, that discipline passed quietly into desuetude while hardly anyone noticed. It is not at all inconceivable, given the history of the humanities, that English studies, though they present the seemingly irreplaceable guardian of the Western cultural tradition, should decline to the current marginal status of the classics.

From the revival of classical culture in Renaissance humanists through the end of the nineteenth century, classical studies reigned supreme in British culture. Then, just when it seemed that an Englishman wishing to enter colonial administration, politics, or the professions absolutely required classical education, it developed that the empire could just as well be majored in English. Somehow the values of the classical tradition and the humanist spirit could now be transmitted through the study of literature in the modern European lan-

guages, especially one's own.

At present this means of transmission prevails. But the arts and literature have appeared to be flourishing in past epochs when in fact they were on the verge of extinction, and so it may be with literature and criticism today. For in the decay of cultural institutions, the moment of demise cannot be pinpointed until well after it has passed. Thus, the poetry and scholarship produced for centuries after the fall of Rome seemed to preserve the classical tradition until they were relegated to the status of a footnote to that tradition. And as for the empire itself, certain Europeans went on living in their villas during the period, unaware that the life they associated

with Rome was a posthumous one.

If it is difficult to pinpoint exactly when an institution has reached the end of its vigorous life, it is relatively easy to detect the signs of its preparation for inconsequence. These are always internal. It is not the attacks from without that prove crucial—not assaults by Goths or cultural revolutionaries—but the ways that the guardians of the tradition themselves behave. In academe, they prove to have abandoned the citadel years before it came under attack. As a result, the professors' uncoerced embrace of absurdity and inconsequence amounts to the surrender of their role in the transmission of culture before a shot was fired. □

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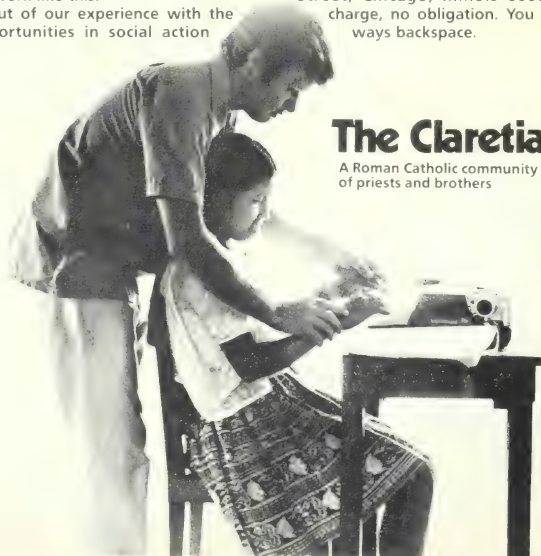
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DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS

The premise of partnership

by Frances Taliaferro

Clover, by Otto Friedrich. 384 pages, illustrated. Simon and Schuster, \$12.95.
Clementine Churchill: The Biography of a Marriage, by Mary Soames. 736 pages, illustrated. Houghton Mifflin, \$16.95.

And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him an help meet for him.
 —Genesis 2:18

CUCKOO, CUCKOO" was once the "word of fear/Unpleasing to a married ear"—the ear of the husband, of course, whose dread of cuckoldry often invited that condition. Now, in an age of "open" marriages as of "open" vocabulary, most words have lost their moral bite along with their power to displease a married ear. One of the few remaining threats, I propose, is *helpmeet*, and it is the woman who shrinks from it.

A helpmeet is a suitable companion, a helper, and especially a wife. There definition ends and association takes over. There is menace in the vision of that willing handmaiden whose patience makes bearable the great bur-

dens of the master. Inexhaustibly available, she subordinates herself to his devices and desires; so truly does she help him that she has no life of her own. She is a sweet nonentity, a shadow, a cipher, most likely a sucker, and we certainly wouldn't want to be in *her* shoes. Helpmeet indeed!

Two of this season's biographies suggest a less defensively myopic view. Clover Adams (1843-1885) was the wife of Henry Adams of Boston, Washington, Mont-St.-Michel, and Chartres; Clementine Churchill (1885-1977), born in the year of Clover Adams's suicide, was the wife of Winston Churchill. For each of them, marriage was virtually the only possible profession open to a woman of her class and milieu. Marriage offered a latitude impossible to a single woman moving within the limits of propriety. Marriage was the promise of partnership in the firm, in a way that it is difficult for our present sensibility to recognize. Though they used their opportunities very differently, each of them was the helpmeet her husband deserved. Clementine wrote to Winston Churchill in 1916, "The war is a terrible searcher of character." She might have said the same of marriage.

CLOVER WAS BORN Marian Hooper, in a family whose fortunes were founded by her grandfather's success in the China trade. Her mother was something of a literary feminist who died of consumption when Clover was five. (Perhaps her early death suggested the futility of both literature and feminism.) Clover's invincibly Bostonian young womanhood culminated in her marriage to Henry Adams in 1872. There was no American family more distinguished than his; he was the

grandson and great-grandson of Presidents. "As for the White House," wrote in *The Education of Henry Adams*, "...the boy half though he owned it, and took it for granted he should some day live in it." Adamses at mid-century still of eminence for granted, but much of energy had been bred out of them, surfaced in Henry's performance as professor of medieval history at Harvard, where his acerbic brilliance and his (then innovative) use of the cratic method made him an elegant radical. Cambridge society displeased him, however, and it was a relief to leave that "social desert that would have starved a polar bear" for a year wandering on his wedding trip. As a happy couple made their way from London, across Europe, and up the Nile, Henry amused himself by "cumulating notes upon some pointed early German law." Clover read *Mademoiselle de Marmont*.

It was a curious marriage. In Friedrich's vivid image, Henry and Clover's lives were "two parallel lines." Frances Taliaferro writes the "In Progress" column in monthly alternation with Jeff Burke.



Clover Adams



Clementine Churchill

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were "crustacean... these two strange creatures, each swimming alone in frozen oceans... [who] managed to find each other, and recognize each other for what they were, and love each other." Clover was a bluestocking, a passionate shopper, a passable photographer, and a very amusing *salonnière*. Henry James, who admired her "irrepressibly," found her "a perfect Voltaire in petticoats" and called the couple "the Clover Adamases." Their life was full of earthly delights, but there was something arid and snappish in their witty view of the world. They were great disapprovers: from Mrs. Rutherford B. Hayes's "fearful" china service to the "acute indigestion" caused by a visit from Matthew Arnold, every experience fed their severity, whose components were wit and ill-submerged anger.

Most curious of all are the occasional outbursts that surely reveal the couple's severity toward each other, whatever the ostensible target. In the early years of his marriage, Henry wrote to a friend, "Our young women are haunted by the idea that they ought... to improve their minds." They are utterly unconscious of the pathetic impossibility of improving those hard, thin, one-stringed instruments which they call their minds." This dyspeptic view later found full expression in Henry's novel *Esther*, published pseudonymously the year before Clover died. Friedrich sees it as "a coded accusation" of Clover; under the guise of a novel of ideas, it is "an exasperated, middle-aged, long-suppressed outburst against her at almost every point on which she was vulnerable." Small wonder that Clover, who was (characteristically) reading Greek at the time, wrote that "the result of a month's wrestling with Agamemnon has brought me to feel great sympathy with Clytemnestra." Her bitterness cannot have been sweetened either by her childlessness or by her husband's chaste but obvious interest in a younger woman.

Clover took cyanide one gray December morning in the elegant Washington house that H. H. Richardson had designed for her and Henry. The traditional explanation is that she could not sustain her terrible grief for her father, dead a year earlier. Friedrich's excellent biography makes it clear that Clover died of futility, "trapped for ever and ever on the very edge of La-

fayette Square, in full view of the White House, that citadel first inhabited by John and Abigail Adams, which Henry and Clover would never enter except as reluctant visitors, self-conscious, ever critical of the deplorable furnishings and the vulgarity of the inhabitants." Clover was forty-two when she died; Henry survived her by more than thirty years. He did not mention her in his autobiography.

THE SHAPE OF Clementine Churchill's life is familiar, from her early days as the ravishing Miss Hozier, whose "beauty, good manners and sufficiency at bridge" ornamented Edwardian society, to her latter years as Baroness Spencer-Churchill of Chartwell, a peeress in her own right and on her own merits. In this tireless biography by Mary Soames, the youngest child of Winston and Clementine, there are few surprises of fact but many pleasures of acquaintance.

Clementine was no mere consort. In the ceremonial sense of the word. When she married Winston in 1903, she began the fulfillment of a vocation that drew on deep resources of energy, intelligence, and practical wisdom. A true partner, a natural radical, she responded with the "noble, puritan element in her nature" to the great reforming measures of Winston's early association with Lloyd George. Her political advice was remarkable for its astute reading of character both in Winston and in others; she was wary and forethoughtful, firm in her command of detail but exhilarated by the call of great enterprises. Charming she could certainly be, but when, for instance, a dinner conversation "took a tone or direction of which she disapproved, she would after a time suddenly 'erupt,' and could maul most savagely those of whose views or characters she either temporarily or habitually disapproved."

In the long unfolding of this biography, one is reminded of Hotspur's impatient cry: "O, the blood more stirs/ To rouse a lion than to start a hare!" Certainly the hare-starting periods of the Churchills' lives were of less interest than the lion-rousing ones. We see both Winston and Clementine at their best in times of greatest danger: the Dardanelles crisis and the months

Winston spent as an officer in France during World War I; the terrible events of the Thirties, rising to the Battle of Britain and the defense of the free world. Clementine's blood stirred to these times, as she gave her executive energy to the management of canteens in the first world war, of hostels, hospital facilities, and the Aid to Russia Fund in the second. (She was awarded the Order of the Red Banner of Labor by the Soviet government in 1945.) Despite the crochets of both partners, it was a magnificent marriage. The trouble some question is that which conceals the needs of the Churchill children. The answer—not quite provided by Mary Soames—seems to be that Clementine made a professional choice when she married, and never pretended that her greatest satisfactions were in the nursery.

HOW DIFFERENTLY Winston Churchill and Henry Adams perceived the obligations of eminence. In Henry's case a cranky self-indulgence was the privilege of one who seems to have been born middle-aged; for Winston, passionate and quite ageless energy could be turned to larger purposes. Clover's contract with Henry Adams came to mean emptiness and despair. Her life, for all its brilliance, was pitiable because she had no true work in the world. Clementine Churchill chose her career when she married, and rose to the top of her profession.

It is instructive to read these two biographies as a pair. Annoyances springs up unbidden: irritation at the acres of upholstery fabric, the decade of dinner conversation, the yards of couture from Worth or Molyneux that obscure the issue when women are the subject. Marriage is in every sense a mystery, and perhaps it is too much to wish that a third person, kin or stranger, might grasp that inscrutable relationship. But we will have no trouble with "biography of a marriage" until the domestic arrangements of men—the laundry, their servants, their visits to the tailor—are given the same sort of attention that clutters the "lives" of women. Or until these details are forgotten, as they deserve to be, regardless of gender.

OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL

by David Suter

The Diversions of the Court of Lilliput Described

...When a great Office is vacant, either by Death or Disgrace (which often happens), five or six of those Candidates petition the Emperor to entertain his Majesty and the Court with a Dance on the Rope. . . . These Diversions are often attended with fatal Accidents, whereof great Numbers are on Record. I myself have seen two or three Candidates break a Limb. —Gulliver's Travels



FAST FOLK

Keeping up with the gerbils

by Louis T. Grant

BOOKS, STUDENTS, and thinking have always been my life, but this, too, is my life: My wife, Barbara, and I are standing in line at the Giant supermarket waiting for our expensive groceries to be inventoried by the computer scanner. Barbara has pulled *Woman's Day* from the metal rack and handed it to me. The spine says "over 19,000,000 readers." Because I'm lucky if half-a-dozen students in thirty are willing to understand anything I say, I take 19 million readers seriously. I see those 19 million copies sliding across the computer scanner and I know that *Woman's Day* has found the formula for success. My eyes fall on an article about a working mother named Charlotte Soulé, and it is as if the Bible had fallen open

to my text. Suddenly everything is explained, everything illuminated. "The New Breed: How Working Mothers Manage" thwacks my soul with all the vigor of the pediatrician's hand on the backside of a newborn.

Charlotte Soulé is Fast Folk. "Vrooom with Yamaha," says the billboard as you approach Denver, where Charlotte and her family posed for the *Woman's Day* trend article. Al Unser is another American hero. *The Guinness Book of World Records* is our Gutenberg Bible, our *McGuffey's Reader*. I recall the great American question of my youth: "What'll she do?" We were speaking of a hot Chevy. In TV

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commercials another American hero, O. J. Simpson, sprints through a port terminals to rent-a-car terminals. The bionic man, woman, and dog race across the screen, eager to convince that they are superhuman (or superdog), not half-human (or half-dog). I know Americans who like to listen to LPs of the Daytona 500 at bedtime. They also find dial phones a drag. Thank AT&T for button phones; facilitate impulse talking.

Tom Wolfe fishtails through my mind in a high-speed Porsche of an article. I remember the Road Runner cartoons. How that supercharged bird could make a fool of that slowpoke coyote. Speedy Gonzalez made cats look like Galapagos tortoises. Bugs Bunny kept the huffing and puffing Elmer Fudd befuddled. When I plead with my students to read William James slowly, I am fighting years of cartoon conditioning. In James's terms, slowness is a "dead hypothesis" in this country. "Such factors of belief as fear and hope, prejudice and passion, imitation and partisanship, the circumstantial pressure of our caste and set" militate against even considering that view slow down.

Woman's Day endorses speed in glorifying and glorifying the life of Charlotte Soulé, who invited the magazine into her life and thus ran the risk that she might emerge at the end of the piece as something other than herself—an exemplar, an exaggeration, a stereotype, or worse. It is her sad fate that she served *Woman's Day's* purpose. Virtually all prestigious sources of opinion—the newspaper, the television, the 19-million-circulation magazine, the corporations, the governments, the movie idols—counsel and represent a blistering pace. Speed is one of the most advertised dimensions of our culture: and who does not know the power of advertising as he wriggles into his Message T-shirt, his skintight

How Working Mothers Manage



Executive Charlotte Soulé likes an efficient working atmosphere. Here, she perches on a cabinet in her office at the

Simsco Corporation in Denver while she and her staff talk business with another executive, Mike Rosen (right).

The New Breed

Charlotte Soulé is a wife and mother. She is also successfully climbing the corporate ladder. She does it with the help of a husband willing to share fully in the work of homemaking and parenting

Below: The Soulés—husband Chris, Charlotte and daughters Christa

located on the cat's and Fritz—do the grocery shopping together. Bottom: Chris, who works at John's Manville, carries a tray of dishes

before he's prepared to a barbecue party outside their new home



Chris Soulé

board? The mere force of the intellect is powerless against prestigious ubiquitous endorsement, against d's propaganda.

s William James put it:

he prestige of the opinions is what takes the spark shoot from them and light up our sleeping magazines of faith. Our reason is quite justified, in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of every thousand of us, if it can find a few arguments that will do to recite in case our credulity is criticized by someone else.

thinking, I am convinced, consists in seeing what is in front of you, not in what you are told is in front of you.

CHARLOTTE SOULÉ is as American as head-on collisions and Arturo Detoo. She is "Manager of Corporate Financial Planning and Analysis for Samsonite Luggage and Home Environment Division of Beatrice Foods." It is doubtful that she observes the 55-mph speed limit even in the halls of her organization. "She waits at the door while a man hurries down the hall. 'Can you move a little faster?' Charlotte says, smiling that gamine smile to show she's joking, and the man closes behind them," observes *Woman's Day* writer Mary Augusta Rogers.

Mary Rodgers is impressed by Charlotte's Shake-a-leg. "The drive from her house in Franktown, Colorado, to her office in the Samsonite Corporate Headquarters complex on the outskirts of Denver takes her forty minutes. A less full and determined driver might make it in much less than an hour," writes J. J. Simpson, Bugs Bunny, and the Solo had better watch out. It is not to be that men set the blistering pace. Now, instead of necking with a woman in the back seat, women are necking with them down the straightaway. When our American heroes are described, we describe them as "skilled and disciplined," not reckless and foolhardy.

What legitimates Charlotte's breakneck speed? Tradition and fashion. Speed has always been in. Fast women are more in than anything. The message of Ms. has now reached *Woman's Day*. Women have been prevented from speeding for too long. They should

wear track shoes with the rest of us. Why should the jet stream be for men only? If speed is good, it's good for women. The endorsers of speed never question it. Speed is not open to examination or critique. Furthermore, those who live by the stopwatch have neither the time nor the training to examine anything carefully. Most supermarket reading matter, from *Woman's Day* to *Psychology Today*, is writing to keep pace, not consider the pace.

"Stop and think," we used to say. If our belief in speed prevents us from stopping, it stops us from thinking. This is the age of the two-week book, the two-day essay. Since speedreading caught on, speedwriting developed to keep abreast. It is assumed that you can read a book with your brain's accelerator to the floor. You can burn rubber from first page to last, do 700, maybe 800, words a minute with 98 percent comprehension. Only in America has so much been read by so many so quickly with so little benefit. Hate to read but feel guilty if you don't? Read *quickly*. Reduce the pain of reading by a fast 25 percent.

Not being fast folk, William James did not subscribe to the belief fast folk have in speed. In "The Will to Believe" he wrote, "A moral question is a question not of what sensibly exists, but of what is good. . . . Science tells us what exists; but to compare *worths*, both of what exists and what does not exist, we must consult not science, but what Pascal calls our heart." In her article on Charlotte Soulé, Mary Rodgers did not consult her heart; she consulted her watch and her feminist program. To decide whether Charlotte Soulé is living the good life, we must move slowly, methodically, consulting our hearts, and seeing what's before our eyes each step along the way.

I was taught to read by Prof. Richard Macksey of Johns Hopkins University. After each statement, one stops to reflect. Is it logically sound, factually accurate? What are its implications? What is its tradition, background? I have crawled for days on the hands and knees of my mind across a single page of Aristotle, ashamed to discover that by the time I had finished *The Metaphysics*, impulsive, competitive Al Unsers of Philosophy had reached William James. I read *Woman's Day* the way I read Aristotle. I attempt an *explication de glossy texte*. I dawdle over

the transparent and innocuous. I loiter at the corner of paragraphs. I go through it almost anthropologically, as if trying to reconstruct a civilization from a shard of inscribed pottery.

WOMAN'S DAY accomplishment does not impress me. Like most fast folk, Charlotte Soulé wears a disguise of euphemism. Charlotte works for the "Samsonite Luggage Corporation." The title is impressive and hides a far less glamorous reality—it's a suitcase factory. Ladies pack mascara in suitcases; men stuff them with cans of Trac II shave cream. A go-go person, Charlotte services people on the go. Properly speaking, Charlotte records debits and credits on the sales of suitcases and passes the paper along to her superiors. Later we find that she is not a certified public accountant but intends to study toward that honor this coming fall. Thus, her official title, "Manager of Corporate Financial Planning and Analysis," is a bit grandiose. She is a college graduate. If the company were not on computer, Charlotte would be chief bookkeeper. Like everyone else at Samsonite, Charlotte wants the rest of the world to think of the company's product as luggage, not suitcases. Fast folk have no time to examine claims. You have to stop to think. In the world of fast folk, letterhead is all; Charlotte is queen.

An accurate look at Charlotte's office belies the euphemism. It does justice to Samsonite's interior decorator and *Woman's Day's* photographer. Its Expedient Decor gives us her real status in the company. The paneling sells for about \$12.95 the 4' x 8' sheet. The five-drawer metal filing cabinet is nearly as tall as one of Charlotte's male assistants, a guy maybe twenty-five in dark slacks, blue long-sleeved shirt, diagonally striped tie. This fellow is standing with his hands in his pockets about three feet from Charlotte so that five fast folk can be squeezed into the photo. He looks like a mannequin in the men's department at Sears, and during the course of his day he probably has about as much autonomy. He is imprisoned in his pose for the photo, trapped in an economic and spiritual fixative, as are the four other posers. When fast folk stop, it is to pose (or to preen), not to think.

A desk with maple-wood-grain veneer supports a black plastic (ball-point?) pen set, an ivory plastic telephone console, a \$200 electric digital calculator, a big coffee mug on a napkin, ten sheets of carefully arranged paper. From the paneling dangles a Toulouse-Lautrec reproduction—Interior Decorator Art. Behind the desk Charlotte sits cross-legged on a hip-high credenza. She's wearing a female busyperson suit—red velvet blouse, light tan skirt and jacket—and on her lap there's a thick report wedged between forearm and thigh. The three men present all have the company haircut and are jacketless. A woman seated to Charlotte's left wears Charlotte's suit but in blue. Somehow I don't see what the caption tells me I'm looking at: "Executive Charlotte Soule likes an informal working atmosphere. Here, she perches on a cabinet in her office... while she and her staff talk business with another executive."

This office is as informal as a furniture store display. Read that caption quickly and you will see what it tells you to see. Only intellectual mulishness, an unmanly refusal to be hustled along, gives you the time to see what's really in the picture. The photograph is a hidden persuader, a people-display selling the lives of fast folk. "The New Breed: How Working Mothers Manage" is a skillfully manipulated magazine display, merchandising a way of life of pointless busyness and shameless consumerism, festooned with quasi-feminist adornments. A placard in Charlotte's office reads: "Whatever women do, they must do twice as well as men to be thought half as good. Luckily this is not difficult." Why is *Woman's Day* merchandising such a life-style? I suspect it has almost nothing to do with women's rights. *Woman's Day* may look like a magazine, but in fact it is 150 pages of advertising.

Woman's Day has tried to invest Charlotte Soule with prestige, but if she is on any executive ladder, she's on a laminated plastic rung and it sags under the weight of a display person.

Charlotte is far from the old stereotype of the Career Woman—an overpowering dame, all furs and feathered hats, who came on like a tropic storm. She's an attractive young woman, soft-voiced and unaffected, who dresses well in a

tailored style. Earrings bed in her pierced ears, and her fingernails gleam with rose-colored polish. She describes herself as "high-strung," but seems calm and composed.

I hear the thunder of cash registers all through this paragraph. The nail polish, the earrings, the tailored look all cost money. Charlotte's attractiveness or display value is made much of here. And while the portrayal may be far from the old stereotype of the career woman, it is precisely the new stereotype of the career woman. *Woman's Day* suggests there is no stereotype here when there is actually nothing else.

WHAT EXACTLY does Charlotte do to occasion so much excitement? Though long, her day at Samsonite scoots by. She leaves home in the morning even earlier than her licky-split husband, Chris, because she "likes to get to work at 7:30 or so." The demanding duties she dispatches so quickly are these: "Just back from a business trip to San Diego, she sits at her desk and checks her expense account, tapping out the numbers quickly on a calculator..." Reading slowly, sounding out the difficult words, I begin to doubt that it takes Wonder Woman to manage such a feat. And where would Charlotte be without her calculator?

Instant Breakfast is too slow for Charlotte. Samsonite suitcases are made for people on the go, and so is yogurt. That's what Charlotte eats as she makes that hour drive in forty minutes so she can enjoy herself checking over her expense account at 7:30 A.M. Charlotte consumes "a spoonful of bran cereal stirred into a carton of yogurt, which she carries to the car." Can we assume then that while Charlotte whips through traffic she is, simultaneously, spooning yogurt into this mug? Let's give this busyperson a round of applause.

And for her next trick? Charlotte "makes some phone calls." One can see how Charlotte earned those three promotions in two quick years. Watch her tap out phone numbers with that deft fingertip touch that could propel her to a vice-presidency some day. More impressive yet, "Holding the receiver with her shoulder, she's able to sort through a stack of papers while she

talks." Imagine, the Manager of Corporate Financial Planning for Samsonite can actually sort and talk at the same time while holding a telephone receiver with her shoulder.

In circus circles this kind of behavior is called juggling. Fast folks are top-notch jugglers. Slowpokes call what I am doing "drawing conclusions." Fast folk call it "dawdling." The of us who hunt and peck can hardly do justice to the lives of nimble-fingered fast folk. I'd need an internal combustion typewriter on steel-bearing radials.

Charlotte enjoys getting to work at 7:30 A.M. so much that "she has decided to go back to school in the morning to qualify as a certified public accountant. 'I'll get to work an hour earlier and do my studying then.'" That's at 6:30 A.M. More applause please.

While Charlotte is sorting and phoning, her secretary "appears at the door." Charlotte, do you have a minute? There's a word here I can't make out. She indicates the line: Charlotte glances down and supplies the word immediately. "The Manager of Corporate Financial Planning has just received her own handwriting. New Breed indeed."

"Ask me anything," Charlotte says smiling.

Charlotte's self-confidence reminds me of that of the young man on "Tic Tac Dough" who answered the following question: "When you eat chicken you are eating one thing, but what are you eating when you eat chili con carne?" This Aristotle of the TV tube was cheered as if he had solved the riddle of the universe or lifted a curtain from Thebes. Now I know what T. S. Eliot meant by "One of the low women whom assurance sits. As a silk hat on a Bradford millionaire."

"Ask me anything," Charlotte says.

Perhaps a less-dedicated employee would take off for the day at this point, figuring the Samsonite Corporation had gotten its money's worth. But Charlotte sprints through a whole morning of this.

"There are other questions, phone calls, paper work, study of budget reports, and planning forecasts, discussion of an upcoming financial review. According to *Woman's Day* this Incredible Person works like this: an average of ten hours a day and many Saturdays.

What are weekends like when she's at the suitcase company reading and handwriting? "On Saturdays, the kids clean house and do the wash." In her free time, Charlotte "keeps family checkbook and pays all the bills. I'm the spender, he's the saver," Charlotte says, announcing a clearly equitable division of marital labor.

After her ten-hour day at the suitcase place, two nights a week Charlotte flies over to Colorado Women's College to teach a course. Remember that other days she arrives at work at 6:00 A.M., drives forty miles home for dinner Chris has made at 6:30 P.M. In the fall she plans to begin studying for her CPA and arriving at work at 6:30 A.M. Will she give up additional income from the Colorado Women's College or continue teaching there as well? What time will she get home in the fall of 1979? And what have we not heard anything about yet? This was to be an article about a wife and mother who is also successful in business. Charlotte was rated as an amazing working mother.

She has two daughters, Paige and Christa. We may get to them yet, if I just keep pumping the accelerator. Meanwhile, "Back in her office after lunch, Charlotte talks briefly to her band on the phone. 'I'll get home—you know—whenever.'" They have had what fast folk call "an intimate conversation." Chris drives the kids to school, cares for the children when they're sick, makes dinner, shops, does the wash. Like married housewives, she has no time for long phone calls. In addition, Chris works every day at Sam's Manville in Denver, arriving at 6:00 A.M. He "gets up at ten minutes before five on weekday mornings to run the car five miles and do the Royal Canadian Mounted Force exercises." All in all, I'd say Charlotte has accomplished the goal of the feminist businesswoman cartoon: she has acquired a wife. Perhaps Chris does a magazine on his side. Let's call it *Man's Day*—and let's not confuse it with the more radical publication,

no matter what: oxygen, sleep, psychotherapy, philosophy." I have turned this thought over in my mind like worry beads for days. I have let it steep in my consciousness, and now I begin to wonder if there might also be an optimum pace at which to live and work, beyond which *speed* actually becomes toxic.

But how do you convince fast folk that speed kills? They need to stop and think, but you cannot sneer them to a halt. They need to consider what is good, to compare worths. If logic worked on them, you could perhaps show them that speed and family, in both of which they believe, are almost mutually exclusive.

Out of sympathy for Charlotte I'd like to hold a mirror up to her so she could see the blur she represents in her daughters' lives. There is a common theme running throughout her story, but you must read slowly to catch it. It's called "Leave the kids." Charlotte began leaving the kids when she decided she was "bored with teaching" and would "get a masters in business administration." Charlotte left Paige, "not yet a year old," at the university day-care center while she worked on her master's degree. "Once a week, Charlotte paid a baby-sitter to stay with Paige while she spent the day in the library, studying." Charlotte went into labor with Christa during her accounting final, "but she finished the exam and was back in class three days later." As I read this, Charlotte began leaving Paige before she was a year old, and continued the practice with Christa after the child had had three days of attention. This behavior has now become a clear pattern in her style of life:

Charlotte herself puts the case bluntly: "When something happens at home, Chris copes, I don't." She has never had to leave work because of a family crisis. "Not even last winter when the kids seemed to have one strep throat after another. Nothing ever rattles Chris."

There is an obvious alternative to washing diapers: Don't go home. Before you decide I'm too harsh, note the following: "Charlotte has her own exercise routine and goes to a noontime exercise class in a health club near work three times a week." This is the very fit Samsonite busyperson who "has never had to leave work" because

her daughters had strep throat. Furthermore, "Charlotte has her pilot's license and loves to fly. When she can afford the time, she takes a morning or afternoon off from work, drives to Boulder and rents a plane."

The truth is that Paige and Christa are not fast enough to keep up with Chris and Charlotte, so they see little of them. Children are slowpokes. The fast parents of slow children depend heavily on school. Paige and Christa go to a Montessori school that "is open from 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. all year." Have two more fortunate children ever lived in a kibbutz? Imagine, they get to go to school ten hours a day, and the privilege continues all year long. They don't have to endure those boring summer vacations. More school is better than less school. But at some point does school become toxic?

Rationalizations abound in this quick romp through a woman's day. The Soules have not seen their children all day, but since a *Woman's Day* article writer is in the house: "Tonight there is a visitor, so adults and children will dine separately" [emphasis added].

Dinner over, the children get in their pajamas while Chris and Charlotte clean up the kitchen. Paige reads the visitor a Dr. Seuss story. . . . Charlotte and Chris come in to kiss the girls goodnight and Chris lingers, getting Christa a drink of water . . . [emphasis added].

One linger.

One kiss fit into a busy day. On schedule. Goodnight.

According to Chris, "Having children is a tremendous responsibility. The way I look at it, you shouldn't have them if you can't accept that. It isn't fair to the kids." Noble sentiments of fast folk. However, Charlotte has ideas for next summer. "If I get a good bonus this year, maybe we ought to shoot the works, leave the kids with their grandparents, and go to Europe on our vacation" [emphasis added].

If I weren't such a slowpoke that Charlotte can't hear anything I say, I would remind her that she is mortgaged to six acres of property; a slow nature walk through her land with her husband and two daughters might do more for her than an afternoon aloft at 200 m.p.h. She might also want to read her children something besides

ACCORDING to Gregory Bateson, the principle that more is better is "the credo of greed. . . . There is always an optimum beyond which anything is toxic,

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AMERICAN MISCELLANY

would have been impossible for me to imagine the equation of being six months ahead of things with being hopelessly out of date.

In any case, my predictions, even the revised ones, turn out not to be true.

THE COLLARS on the waiters' shirts are small and narrow. The waiters' ties are narrow and beige wool. All the waiters are young. Many of them have beards and moustaches. The waiters look, in fact, as if they have all just stepped *en masse* out of the windows of Maxfield Bleu. Our own particular waiter is endearingly earnest. He begins to explain the menu, which is entirely in French. Several of the people at the table do not speak French, but the menu contains some recondite references to garniture that succeed in puzzling even those who do. The waiter instigates some banter about waiters in other restaurants whose vocabulary is confined exclusively to menu French. He goes on to mispronounce the names of several dishes. Later in the evening he recommends a wine called Fred's Friend. "I think it's supposed to be a camp name," he says.

We order. We settle down. We begin to plot trading of portions—a few *aiguillettes* of duck in exchange for a bit of grilled pigeon, a forkful of fish timbale in return for some *salade chinoise*. And then all of a sudden, who should walk in but Z., a television story editor whom T. and I last saw at a friend's house two weeks ago, who is also an acquaintance of B. and J.'s, and who turns out to be on his way to a table on the patio reserved by D. and M.'s friend A. And here is A. himself, back from a chat with the proprietor of the restaurant: he kisses M. hello. (A. moves in two worlds. Tonight he is wearing his magazine wine-critic's hat; tomorrow he will be at the Palm, pitching a concept.) And here is the last pony-tailed producer in Hollywood: he stops to shake hands with B. "Amazing," B. says. "How often do I see you—twice a year? I can't believe I talked with you on the phone yesterday and now you've shown up tonight." The pony-tailed producer is on his way to join A.'s table, too.

And here is R., sitting across from us. We wave and smile. This is like a

party. This is like lunch at a commissary. This is...

D AND T. ARE screenwriters discovered them both. In a sense, T. used to write as a partner in Boston; D. went to UCLA film school and had written several scripts without making an overwhelming splash. B. is now a network executive. He started as an agent, actually he started as a director in summer theater back East; he left that job at the agency to try and produce a script of D.'s, for which he'd retained for D. his first splash-movie money. He went on to produce another picture. In the days when he was a producer, when we had just moved from Boston, he read and liked T.'s first solo script and tried to get that off the ground. R. replaced him at the agency. He was T.'s agent for a time. Now he is a studio executive, a baby mogul. When R. and his wife got divorced, he went to live for a period with L. and his wife, a couple who are also close friends of B. J.'s, and fairly close friends of D. M.'s, and medium-close friends of mine. Actually, that is how D. M. and we originally met—B. and I introduced us at the start-party for a movie written by L., a movie based on a novel of his, based on himself. Directed by K., who, together with his wife, is another close friend of B. J.'s and who, we discover when we meet, sat behind me in college in Sci. 6. Now L.'s wife (who turns out to have been at Berkeley with T. writing a movie for R. R.'s former wife has become a friend of T.'s mine. (She does not speak to G., replaced R. at the agency and is current agent. This is because she once co-wrote a television pilot with G.'s cousin O., who is now married to a famous film director—famous principally because of his public dispute with a famous female star, whose second-most-recent film he directed, whose most recent film was directed by G.'s male housemate, H.—and now that the pilot has been filmed under the direction of another friend of T.'s and mine, another former client of the agency's, is attempting, aided by G., to get more money from it. R.'s former wife believes she is entitled to.)

former wife is writing a novel in which R. is prominently featured. I helped her edit the manuscript. I also am an acquaintance of D. and last Tuesday an article about an occasion she and they and I took a good final appeared in the L.A. At the very moment we look at her R., M. has begun to inquire after her...

In this sense of coincidence, of the intricate, hangs in the air; I am giddy with it. I ask B. the name of a woman who is sitting with me else we know, and he says, "Her name is... her name is... she is B. R.C.'s girlfriend"—B., the manvinnistic of men! B., who the before has had dinner with Mashevis Singer, and had talked in else for weeks; B., who read years before he appeared in *New Yorker*, and in fact found the literary agent who put him in B., who still reads serious fiction without regard to its value as a property. But we are all of us people—that is the point. In the public nursery school, and M. in an architectural magazine and for the preservation of old buildings and I write articles (usually) attempting to disabuse people of their for double-knit politicians. D. has maintained a fervor for etymology. We all—except for T., who is only misanthropic that he is in anger of it—made a conscious to avoid being swallowed up. Let something is happening to there is no question of it. The arrive and they are wonderful

and we share tastes and comments, but we keep on glancing around. There has been a shift in focus. And we feel queasy about it, and keep wrestling our glances back...

What am I trying to get at? That the hermetic, hothouse quality of the evening is precisely what beguiles us, even as we bemoan it; that the hum of *we are all here* heightens our enjoyment of the food and wine, like raspberry vinegar, like *eau de vie*. And still we sit talking wistfully about "real" cities, like Seattle and New Orleans, where the waiters in elegant restaurants are "real" waiters and not young men who look like mannequins out of the windows of Maxfield Bleu.

The proprietor of the restaurant has been squeezing our hands and pressing our shoulders a little too heartily throughout the meal. A. stops by on his way out. He volunteers to relay the message. Jovial discussion of how to articulate the minor shortcomings of the fish timbale. "Just... vaguely... not there, somehow." This message, too, will be conveyed.

The man waiting to claim our table for the second seating had been waiting for B.'s table at Chasen's the night before.

Upstairs in the ladies room, with its natural-wood shutters and its brass fixtures and its elegant bowls of potpourri, a girl says, "He's the perfect roommate. He sleeps all day and works all night; I never see him."

ACROSS THE STREET, in the middle of the Santa Monica Mall, with its wig shops and its Albert's Hosiery and its discount shoe outlets—the mall, which is, of course, a real part of a real city—a pony-tailed young man who is not a producer is sitting in a folding vinyl patio chair, looking at the screens of three different TV sets tuned to three different channels in the window of an appliance store. We ask him what he is watching. And he says—I can't remember what he says. This is a part of it: that I can't remember what he says; that I call M. the next day and she can't remember either. I think he says, "I'm not really watching anything." I think he says, in the darkness, "I'm just waiting for 'The Late Show.'" □



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after knowing me so long
all the laughs
asked to read my book

by Geof Hewitt

FOOLING WITH THE BUDGET

(Continued from page 52) dependent of the huge bureaucratic professoriate at the disposal of Senator Muskie and his majority staff predict the effect of a specified budget cut on inflation in 1984? (How can anyone, for that matter?)

But if he so desires, Hatch can have all the expertise he wants. "Bring your proposals to us and we'll cost them out for you," a friendly majority staffer will say to Hatch before the budget deliberations begin. Come into my parlor... Of course, the costing-out will probably look bad for the employment picture, and for economic growth if it involves anything but a cut in defense spending.

At the beginning of this year's budget deliberations, Sen. William Armstrong proposed that revenues be considered before spending. In other words, he suggested, let us find out how much money we have to spend before we allocate it. This was not a popular idea. Sen. Daniel P. Moynihan (D-N.Y.) said: "It seems to me that the better argument is to decide society's needs and find out what that costs and then decide whether or not it is feasible to raise that much.... You don't decide in advance how much you are going to spend and fit your defense budget into it. You find out how much you need for defense." This of course was precisely the form of budgeting that the 1974 Budget Act was supposed to prevent. But Senator Armstrong's proposal was defeated, 11-1. Armstrong's fellow freshmen Republicans on the Budget Committee, Sens. Nancy Landon Kassebaum of Kansas, Rudy Boschwitz of Minnesota, and Larry Pressler of South Dakota, in addition to Senator Bellmon, all voted against Armstrong's sensible proposal.

An analogous maneuver took place in the House of Representatives. In 1978, Rep. Marjorie Holt of Maryland very nearly succeeded with an amendment that would have forced across-the-board spending cuts and simultaneous tax cuts. After the 1978 elections, the Democratic leadership became convinced that Holt's amendment, if offered again, would pass. So they changed the rules on her. Now you cannot propose amendments that cut aggregate spending figures *without specifying exactly where spending will be cut*. This gives an opportunity for those who would be affected by such cuts to

come up and lobby on Capitol Hill against the proposal. Such a rule change, of course, blatantly disregards the spirit and letter of the Budget Act.

The jigsaw puzzle

BY THE TIME the budget debate began on the Senate floor this year, the Senate Budget Committee had successfully fought off virtually all budget cuts. On the other hand, many spending categories had been increased (by law, in some cases) to allow for inflation. As a result, the nation is faced with a budget of which an increasing percentage is said to be "uncontrollable." Of course, this percentage (currently about 76 percent) is not really uncontrollable, because Congress could always change the law. The appeal of the concept from the point of view of the spender is that it gives the impression that a shrinking proportion of the budget is at the mercy of the budget cutter and that the only changes that *can* be made are spending increases, since there is no law against that. In this way, then, the "income security" category went up this year to \$183.3 billion (last year it was \$159.3 billion). Defense spending was up; international affairs spending was up; so was spending on natural resources and environment; transportation; education, training, employment, and social services; health, justice; and general government. And there was a big increase in the federal interest payment (up from \$48 billion to \$56 billion) because of the rapidly mounting national debt.

Overall, when the Senators began their deliberations, the budget outlays under discussion (now fattened up to accommodate inflation, and more) were about \$45 billion higher than in the previous fiscal year. Meanwhile—and it is important to bear this in mind—federal revenues were moving ever upward thanks to inflation. Whenever there was a new estimate of revenue, it was higher than the earlier one. At the time of the Second Concurrent Budget Resolution, in October, 1978, federal revenues were estimated at \$449 billion. But by the time the books were closed on fiscal 1979, the figure had jumped to \$461 billion. By the time of President Carter's budget message in January, 1979, federal revenues for fiscal

1980 were estimated to be \$503 billion. Then, by the time of the First Concurrent Resolution for fiscal 1980, in of 1979, revenues were estimated to be up again, to \$509 billion. (A later, with no tax cut, they will soar to \$583 billion.)

In any event, at the time of the get debate in April, the Senators see that they were facing a deficit of \$29 billion. (Spending: \$532 billion; revenues then estimated at \$503 billion.) And people all across the country were beginning to speak up for a balanced budget. The more the Senators could see that as long as didn't vote for any tax cuts, the budget would balance itself before too long. It wouldn't be necessary to cut spending either. (In fact, down the road as long as inflation didn't let up—looked to be some nice possibility—spending increases.)

The Senate then declared its intentions by voting that the Budget Committee should "report" a balanced budget in fiscal 1981. But "report" not mean "compel," or even "recommend." Then they voted to increase the debt ceiling, up now to \$830 billion. (They have to vote this increase each year, to prevent the government from being legally "in default" on its debt.)

Senator Muskie read his own story about the budget, a real tearjerker was, too, full of such phrases as "discipline," "take the heat," "to the pain." And he quoted President Carter's phrase to describe the profligate budget: "Lean and austere." Muskie sent his annual bouquet to Bellmon ("my good friend and time and indispensable associate of the Budget Committee"). And he praised Muskie ("coolheaded, hands-on... He was able to bring a consensus").

Enter Senator Proxmire, amendment in hand. It had a beautiful simplicity. "On page 2, line 24, strike out '\$400,000,000' and insert in lieu thereof '\$503,600,000,000'." On page 3, line 1, strike out '\$28,800,000,000' [the cut], and insert '\$0'." Well, for the time the Senators had been shepherding the budget how terrible it was the budget wasn't in balance, and here they were trying to balance it with across-the-board spending cut of 5 percent. Proxmire had worked where the cuts could be made, in such items as a \$6.8 billion in

revenue sharing ("the federal government has no revenue to share," Proxmire said) and a \$1.3 billion cut in foreign aid ("mostly an extension of public works and highway lobby money").

Proxmire, a Senator who says we cannot cut more than 5 percent of the bloated more than half-trillion federal budget... is now trying," Proxmire said. "Five percent. That is all we need to achieve a balanced budget in 1980. Mr. Proxmire is a democracy. Does anyone really doubt that this amendment is an overwhelming majority of Americans want us to do?"

Proxmire went on to say that *now* was the time to balance the budget, when the economy was growing and more people were having jobs. "If we cannot move to a balanced budget now we are not likely to do so without the kind of constitutionally mandated restraint that we all deplore."

"I want a balanced budget," said the Senate majority leader, Robert C. Dole of West Virginia. "Everyone wants a balanced budget." But this was not the vote against the Proxmire amendment, 67-23, showed.

Proxmire's subsequent attempts to cut the budget on the floor of the Senate were rebuffed, with the exception of a small \$400 million at the end of the year (after several increases larger than that had been added on). The amendment could not even bring itself to vote on the amendment by Senator Hatch, \$1.1 billion from federal travel, education, and film-making expenses. The vote on this was close, 44-41. Opponents of the proposal were not merely the Democrats; one might expect, such as the Governor of Iowa, Donald Riegle of Michigan, and Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, but, surprisingly, a somewhat crucial constellation of members from southern states who give the appearance of having caught the fever (Donald Stewart of Alabama, Bennett Johnston of Louisiana, and both David Pryor and Dale Gribble of Arkansas—the latter's vote record somewhat resembling Senator Kennedy's).

Proxmire's role in the debate amounted to advocating a read tax increases at one point. Proxmire might not be worth mentioning, but to draw attention to the extraordinarily devious language in which he addressed the Senate. Kennedy said

that although the budget resolution contained "reductions in some forms of federal spending, it requires no reductions at all in tax spending.... For fiscal year 1980, federal spending through tax laws will reach the record total of \$168 billion."

The man is devious! What does "tax spending" mean? It means "tax loopholes" (sometimes called "tax expenditures" in the jargon he prefers). Kennedy is really saying: If we are going to cut spending, let us also consider closing tax loopholes, i.e., raising taxes. Kennedy betrays himself as believing that when the government grants you permission to keep a little bit more of your money, through a specified tax reduction, it is really the government's money you are spending. It is as though he believes that all money belongs to the government in the first place.

That is what sometimes happens to people who have been in government as long as Kennedy. They get so used to spending other people's money that they end up thinking it's their own. And that also is surely the key to the problem when you think about the vote on the Proxmire amendment. Those sixty-seven Senators who voted against it weren't voting against a balanced budget because they thought it would be politically unpopular to do so. Proxmire is a politician, too—very much so. He was quite right when he said that "an overwhelming majority of Americans" would be in favor of his proposal, and it was no doubt perfectly safe, politically, to vote for it.

Why, then, did sixty-seven Senators take the politically unpopular course? Some of the conservatives who opposed it didn't like the fact that the amendment included defense cuts of about \$6 billion. A few of the others may even genuinely have believed the fantastic claim by the CBO that government spending is more stimulative than private-sector spending, that savings are a drag on the economy, and so on.

But surely the underlying reason is that it is very hard indeed for a lawmaker to vote for diminishing his own power. And that is what a spending cut ultimately entails: a reduced level of dependence on government for all citizens. Our dependence is their power, and that is what most politicians don't want to reduce.

THE PRESS delivered an ovation after it was all over. After the First Concurrent Resolution passed by a vote of 64-20 in the Senate, the Budget Committee put out a press release headlined: SENATE ADOPTS STRINGENT BUDGET RESOLUTION.

The truth was that the budget had grown by nearly 10 percent over the year before, and 18 percent over the past two years. Revenues had grown much faster—up by 26 percent in two years. And so the budget was indeed coming into balance—on a swiftly rising tide of taxes.

On June 1, 1979, the *Washington Post*, which earlier had termed the proposal to balance the budget in 1981 "draconian," commended the "responsible budgeting that Congress is now learning to do." The next day the *New York Times* published an editorial applauding the "sweeping reform of the Congressional budgetary process."

We may surmise that, reading the papers, the wily old Muskie put his arm around the Budget Committee's press secretary, Jim Conroy, and congratulated him on a job well done.

Meanwhile there was the Second Concurrent Resolution to be thinking about, the one in September with the binding budget totals. The spending totals would no doubt be adjusted upward by then—especially if there was any indication of a recession coming. Any signs of that? Ah, here we are: on the front page of the *Washington Post*, June 10, 1979:

MAJOR RECESSION NOW FORECAST BY HILL BUDGET OFFICE

by Art Pine

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office has privately warned Congress to expect a full-fledged recession this year and through most of 1980, with inflation continuing at a double-digit pace and the jobless rate rising to 7.5 percent.

One read on expectantly until one discovered that the final piece of the jigsaw puzzle had fallen into place:

If the CBO forecast proves accurate, it could add at least \$6 billion, and potentially a good deal more, to the budget deficit next year and dash plans by Congress and the administration to balance the federal budget in fiscal 1981. □

PUZZLE

SELF-EXPLANATORY

by E. R. Galli and
Richard Maltby, Jr.

This month's instructions:

Fifteen of the clue answers are not to be entered normally, which is the reason for various peculiarities in this puzzle and its diagram (actually, one of the fifteen is entered normally, but clued abnormally). Unchecked letters may be rearranged to spell: FORM STANK (GRUNT), BUT DON'T T.N.T. NON-PUNNING FANS.

Clue answers include four proper words. Be particularly wary of 21A. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 119.

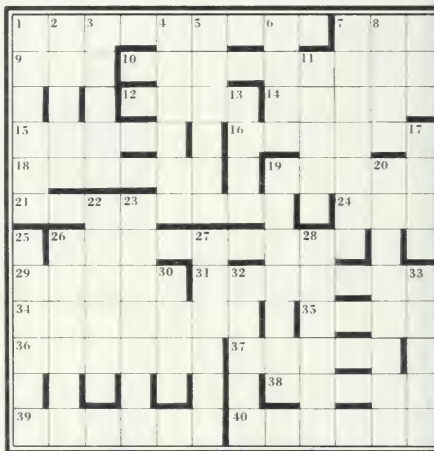
CLUES

ACROSS

- Where the teams are following, I'm about to split differences (17)
- Obliquely provide food, trapped (5-8)
- (3)
- Sort of pop in large GE ranges (6, 3)
- Head off freight for legendary ship (4)
- Garden spot of Dearborn? (5)
- Give less than is due diminutive Oriental detective, for example, in comeback (11)
- Embracing bishop, endeavors to make large families (6)
- The frame of Kentucky colonel's doghouse (6)
- Express bad taste (5)
- Most woes could appear in pairs (8)
- Drink one-third of the drink at 10 (3)
- In terms of tickets, take the batter's place away from diamonds (3, 6)
- Frame holding the Greek hog (9)
- (7)
- "Is sex romance"—tricky question in court (5-7)
- Sounds like prize instrument (4)
- Wearing kind of shirt and one piece of jewelry (6)
- Saunter in hopelessly, having a gloomy disposition (9)
- The average mother in an Italian city (5)
- Birds put bit of grain in transplanted trees... (6)
- ...not so hard, being lost in forest (6)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Self-explanatory, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by October 12. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year sub-



DOWN

- Busses and boats (6)
- Subject indefinitely turned over the church donation (1)
- One is upset over an Oriental (5)
- Music for the grave-diggers: heartless and ugly (6)
- Moving clumsily—the sole activity? (11)
- Tackle in furious rage (4)
- Produce a small bullet in cell (7)
- African plant alone drops name (4)
- Sound from the cat—its back is where the rider steps (1)
- Half-quart swallows do me no good at the foot of the mountain (8)
- Small tip for "order to go" (4)
- Likes taking in backtalk and quiet offhand remarks (1)
- Generous wages for extra work go fast in the army (6)
- Composer uses meter with light-weight skill (6)
- (7)
- Venturesome pair is inside registering... (12)
- ...enclosing the ring (6)
- Play \$1000 (American) for smut (6)
- Lucky place to switch highways? (10)
- Place for curling part in hair, in Kenneth's (4)
- Yields outside the South and retreats (5)
- Keep out bread pudding (5)

scription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the November issue. Winners' names will be printed in the December issue. Winners of the August puzzle, "The Uncrossword Puzzle," were Martha C. Ash, Louisville, Kentucky; Ralph W. Cain, Austin, Texas; and Don Tait, Santa Barbara, California.



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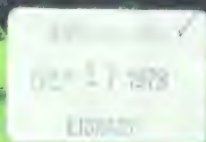
by George Plimpton

November 1979 \$1.50

Harper's

John Fowles

SEEING NATURE WHOLE



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es, taxonomy, Victorian science, art,
graphy, Darwin, and Satan's green cloak



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LETTERS

Pleasure and punishment

Andrew Hacker's "Of Two Minds About Abortion" [September] is both welcome and disappointing. Mr. Hacker dispassionately and accurately describes the positions so passionately held by both opponents and advocates. No author I have read recently puts the onus of the issue so squarely where it belongs: sexual pleasure. Mr. Hacker's citation of the statistics accompanying the frequent after-fact of that pleasure is startling indeed: 75 percent of all abortions are performed on unmarried women; only one in twelve abortions is performed on women who have more than three children, the women purported to need the remedy most. Abortion, as Hacker correctly states, is no "last resort," but a major mode of birth control. Euphemisms may abound in the terminology of both groups, but there is no denying the reality of destroyed humankind, however valid the asserted reason.

What is disappointing are Mr. Hacker's concluding paragraphs. Perhaps he can tell us how he can logically support unrestricted abortion and simultaneously label it the taking of human life (i.e., murder?), pragmatically immoral, and counter to a stable and moral social order. Is this vital issue so academic as to permit such disparity between a judgment and the reality to which it is assigned? Surely, as a political scientist, Mr. Hacker shares the concern he ascribes to abortion's opponents "over the society we will have and the people we will be." How then, as a supporter of abortion, is he able "to avoid such questions"? These questions and concerns must be faced if there is ever to be a resolution to this divisive social and moral conundrum.

D. THOMAS KING, M.D.
West St. Paul, Minn.

Andrew Hacker makes it quite clear that there are two sides to the controversy in every respect but one, which I think, is the most important real law: An absolute prohibition of abortion would have the same effect as an absolute prohibition of alcohol, which drinks some sixty years ago. It would simply drive the practice underground and into the hands of irresponsible and often unskilled practitioners in slums. Reputable surgeons would perform abortions because of fear of the law, but charlatans could maim and even kill women whose only error was submitting to a primordial urge.

In 1926 and thereabouts, bootleg abortions were almost as common as bootleg booze, but it wasn't considered proper then to talk about such things. Both phenomena were by-products of the all-American myth that problems can be solved by enacting a law. The Babylonian Emperor Hammurabi found out some thirty-eight centuries ago that rising prices could not be stopped by issuing an edict, and the principle is still operating.

Of course, "abortion is a taking of human life." So also are war, law enforcement, and self-defense, all of which are justified by one reason or another. The "right to life" must have a hollow sound to the surviving relatives of the millions of men who were drafted to serve in the wars of the twentieth century and never returned. Did they have a "right to life"? To ask this question is to answer it.

HAROLD KLEIN
Aurora, Colo.

Not all those who oppose abortion oppose contraceptive methods to prevent conception in the first place. Nor are all opponents of the issue insensitive to the social and psychological effects childbirth can have on an individual or family. In fact, Mr. Hacker

happiness" with his own pro-position position—that it is the "taking of human life"—is the deciding factor for the majority in opposition. To equate human life with social cost and convenience is simply morally unacceptable to many of us. Do we not merely extend such an argument to encompass those members of our society who have "outlived" their usefulness and now create a social and financial burden for us?

To those of us who oppose abortion, there is no difference between the ability of the genocidal suggestion in the latter statement than there is in taking of an unborn life.

ASTOR L. SIMPSON
Middlesboro, Ky.

Andrew Hacker's statements at the end of his essay—that opponents of abortion have shown "concern over society we will have, and the people we will be," and that supporters of abortion have preferred to ignore the issue—is utterly absurd. Pro-choice people do share a parallel vision.

It is a vision of a world where all children that are born are wanted, able to be well-fed, well-loved, and to grow into healthy individuals. To use a phrase that I am sure Hacker is familiar with, pro-choice supporters look toward a society in which children are conceived by choice, not by chance. The parallel vision of pro-choicers is a world in which each newborn life is welcomed as a blessing and a joy—never as a burden or a sorrow.

One can argue the merits and demerits of each view, but to refuse to acknowledge the very existence of this equally high social vision points only to Mr. Hacker's ill-concealed bias on this issue.

ELISABETH VOTTELER
Kansas City, Mo.

It may be true that the anti-abortion lobby does not hew to any one religion. But across the United States there are indications of overwhelming fund-raising and lobbying efforts by the Catholic hierarchy—beginning at

the parish level, though managed diocese by diocese—to drive through anti-abortion legislation, particularly the proposed constitutional amendment. It cannot be disputed that the anti-abortion lobby has deliberately inflamed supporters, regardless of religion, to mount vicious attacks on abortion clinics and personnel. Bombs have been thrown; acid has been splashed in faces. The lobby has done nothing to discourage violence. In addition, "dirty tricks" campaigns have popped up across the nation. Hospital personnel have been bribed to disclose names of abortion patients for harassment, which has taken an especially nasty form.

The abortion controversy simply cannot be reduced, as Mr. Hacker attempted, to the question of how much sex we may or may not enjoy. To do so does a great disservice to both sides—especially, in my view, to feminists. It is silly to suggest their prime motivation here is pleasure. Finally, to claim that feminists do not show "a concern over the society we will have, and the



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people we will be, once their ends are attained," betrays an appalling ignorance. I'll be glad to provide him with a reading list. So much for the clarity of "being caught in a crossfire."

DAVID HAWARD BAIN
New York, N.Y.

ANDREW HACKER REPLIES:

These letters illustrate just what I meant by "being caught in a crossfire." I wish I could have the single-minded certainty shown by most of the writers. As Dr. King aptly puts it, abortion is a "social and moral conundrum" and I don't think we are even close to an answer.

Yes, I personally favor abortion. I do not think any woman should have her life hobbled with children she does not want. This holds especially for women in their teens and early twenties, where pregnancy nears epidemic proportions. I am also saddened by the life that lies ahead for so many unwanted children. So I share Elisabeth Votter's desire for "a society in which children are conceived by choice." (I would add only that "choice" can be very ambiguous here. Some women choose to become pregnant for rather unhealthy reasons.)

Still, as I admitted in the article, I find myself unhappy with this position. The availability of socially approved abortion can only affect the kind of people we are. Not its least impact is to make us more self-centered—and I include men in this description. Astor Simpson is made of stronger stuff than I am, for Simpson would force people to be socially responsible by making them have unwanted babies. I don't see that as a solution.

David Bain feels I have done women a disservice. Nowhere did I make pleasure the prime motivation. What my article did suggest, however, is that abortion will have to be a stand-by for women who wish to have a sex life and pursue serious careers as well. Nor do I say this as criticism. After all, men don't get pregnant.

Station break

Stephen Chapman wants to do away with public television because it is inequitable: his argument in part is that the poor, who aren't interested, subsidize the rich, who can afford to buy

their culture ["Down with Public Television," August]. His solution is to let commercial television take up the cultural slack: Home Box Office (HBO) seems to be his idea of a replacement.

Mr. Chapman cites the low ratings of programs on the Public Broadcasting Service. Does he then really expect HBO, a profit-making corporation, to offer the likes of Shakespeare, "Live from the Met," and "Nova," which, as Mr. Chapman puts it, are the programs viewers pass on their way from "Hawaii Five-O" to "Barney Miller"? What interest does commercial television have in a "Consumer's Survival Kit" or a "McNeil/Lehrer Report"? And what if much of the culture comes from Great Britain? At least it gets here. Mr. Chapman sneers at "Upstairs, Downstairs," but that is precisely the sort of programming HBO or a similar outfit might dare to put on. Would it ever attempt *The Golden Bowl*?

Moreover, how does he know that the people in Harlem who help to support public television don't watch it? Apart from teachers, doctors, lawyers, businessmen, there must be others who occasionally watch something besides "Diff'rent Strokes" and "The Jeffersons." Do the children of Harlem never watch "Sesame Street" or "The Electric Company," which, whatever their faults, compared to the afternoon offerings of commercial television are at least civilized and perhaps marginally educational? In claiming that the poor subsidize the rich, Mr. Chapman fails to note the progressive nature of the income tax. Nor does he say that the cost per average taxpayer for public television is about a dollar a year. Even pay television, seemingly the best of the alternatives, is, at the price, no competition. Mr. Chapman is proposing, in effect, the dissolution of the one means of quality television the poor have—or are likely to have.

JOHN HUMMA
Statesboro, Ga.

Stephen Chapman bewails the use of taxpayers' funds for public broadcasting, but admits that only a quarter of the funding comes from federal taxes. The rest comes from a long list of corporate sponsors (not just Mobil, which was somehow singled out), from foundation grants, individual contributions, and other private sources. As a

taxpayer and contributor to public television I feel that some level of federal support is entirely justified: after all, my taxes do support a huge agency—the Federal Communications Commission—which spends most of its resources riding herd over the commercial stations whose programs are largely unacceptable to me. Why, then, should others not be taxed to help keep stations on the air that are acceptable to me?

Mr. Chapman's alternatives to public television are naive: cable television with Home Box Office (why should I pay \$100 per year for programs that are neither to my liking nor suited to family viewing?); videoplayers (we spend \$750 for a gadget and then \$8 or so per program cassette?); satellite-to-home transmission (rabbit ears won't do, and the cheapest dish antenna I know of goes for \$1,000—kit form). None of this is needed, and very few can afford it. Regular AM/FM radio will do just fine, and a number of persons within range of television station can tune in. Where else do you still find a mechanism where high utilization does not require incremental energy to satisfy demand?

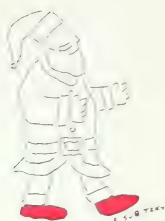
H. J. HUNTER
Austin, Tex.

I live in a somewhat remote part of the western United States. I am neither rich, influential, nor part of any "high minded" East Coast conspiracy. Yet I watch public television with some regularity and find that it provides a third person's alternative to the mindless chase scenes and postpubescent jiggling of body parts that make up the bulk of network programming.

For those of us who are removed from the larger metropolitan area, public television represents an important means to avoid being culturally homogenized. Shame on Stephen Chapman for his pseudo-democratic and spurious reasoning. Shame on *Harper's* for printing such half-truths.

LELAND G. ALKIRE, Jr.
Cheney, Wyo.

Stephen Chapman's error is that he blames public television for not developing a mass audience; this never has been nor should it be the purpose of public television. As the new Carnegie Commission report explains, its aim is to reach a wide variety of sp



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Who cannot remember, as a child, certain faint pressures to masquerade as a child?

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If you were the first person in the world to advance the unwelcome notion that the earth was not flat, exactly how long would you have lasted?

The really odious thing about thought control is that it stifles not only the innovator but also the innovator's audience. Einstein (and his audience) were treated to indifference, persecution, scorn and condescending flattery.

The reason I am bringing all this up is not to commiserate over the well-known resistance to fresh thinking, but to invite you, and your friends, to personally be present at the time such thinking is first made public.

I am convinced that as a reader of this magazine, you have an interest in fresh, often unpopular, sometimes painful points of view; and I also believe you have the stomach for it.

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cialized audiences, each taken together making up a sizable proportion of Americans, instead of appealing to the great mass with each program by the steady diet of sitcoms and hackneyed melodramas. By this more sophisticated cumulative-audience measure, public television has been doing rather well: it reached 49 percent of the potential nationwide audience at least once during a typical month in 1975 and raised this figure to 63 percent by 1978.

Nor is it fair to imply, as Mr. Chapman does, that public television cannot attract even more viewers. The munificence he claims has already been showered on public television by the government is a pittance compared to the support Europeans give to their noncommercial television systems (and is responsible for the tedious fund-raising efforts of which he complains). With such meager support, public television has had to fight its way in against the entrenched power of the networks and their cohorts at the independents. To contend, under these circumstances, that Americans will not watch better programming of the kind seen in Europe is to say we are dumb and Britons, Frenchmen, and Germans are smart.

SPENCER C. WARREN
New York, N.Y.

I found Stephen Chapman's article quite by chance as I leafed through *Harper's*; the situation is analogous to turning the dial to our public-television station in the expectation of finding something stimulating there. But if his article were presented to me in a sealed envelope, title only, for possible purchase (as with subscription television) I might very well have saved my money. We need to experience all of a drama or documentary or concert, essay, et cetera, and judge it afterward—not before. First the concept must be presented to the public. No one asked Picasso to paint a lady with two eyes on the same side of her face.

Mr. Chapman also assumes that dollars are the only medium of exchange. But commercial television exacts enormous amounts of viewer time for attention to sales pitches. This is a real payment made in a most valuable resource.

Finally, Mr. Chapman didn't mention children's programming at all. Do we pass the hat for the children's pennies

or leave the kids on "Gilligan's Island" with no way to get to "Sesame Street"?

SIBYL KRAUSZ
Pacific Palisades, Calif.

Stephen Chapman rightly savages the smug assumptions of the public-television establishment, but his remedy seems analogous to that of some Jarvis-like fiscal conservative who would have us close the public libraries with the reasoning that, after all, the poor don't read books and the rich can afford to buy them. In essence, Mr. Chapman's vision is as myopic as that of the Carnegie Commission worthies.

Public television, with its bedtime stories for liberals, tennis matches, and rampant anglophilia is a frail and knock-kneed David to the network's Goliath, but it's all we've got. For more than a decade now, cable and videocassette technology have been hailed as incipient springs that are about to water the vast wasteland. Perhaps—but I am not encouraged by a situation that presents a family with a choice: "Let's see, we can get 'Charlie's Angels' for free but Shakespeare's gonna cost us!"

I was hoping that Mr. Chapman would touch on the perennial problem of public television: it absorbs a great deal of money already and little of it finds its way onto the screen.

Public-television executives sit behind expensive desks on their hefty salaries and tell hopeful young producers that there is no money for their ideas. Too often, public television functions as an employer of last resort for network hacks, whose principal job is to present palatable projects to corporate public-relations officers.

One is indeed tempted by the idea that the whole operation should be folded and built up again from scratch, but that isn't the way it would work. The intellectual ghetto would be paved over for a parking lot.

KENNETH NELSON
Venice, Calif.

We need not moan the extinction of the species "good programs." In my family's home, Texaco's "Your Box at the Opera" has been standard fare since its first broadcast. If Texaco and one commercial network can do this, why can't anyone else figure it out? In fact, if this kind of program didn't have to compete with fully subsidized

"public" television or radio, it would likely be healthier and there would be more of them.

PAUL M. CRAIG
Great Barrington, Mass.

STEPHEN CHAPMAN REPLIES:

H. J. Huith sees no reason he should pay for an alternative form of television such as cable as long as public television exists. Nor do I. Obviously public-television viewers are better getting other people to pay for the entertainment. Most other Americans, however, would be better off if the viewers would pay for it themselves.

Mr. Humma doubts that Home Box Office will offer the sorts of programs now broadcast by public-television stations. I didn't suggest that it would only that a cable system, which could offer thirty or forty channels instead of one, would have every reason to broadcast such programs if there were an audience for them. (The cable enterprises might discover an incentive to cultivate such an audience if they did not face competition from the public network, as Mr. Craig points out.) The development of cable television, however, has been stifled by the same government that subsidizes public television.

Unlike Mr. Warren, I think it is a great achievement that all programs of public television together reach less than two-thirds of the viewing audience as often as once a month. The fact is that singly, even the most popular programs reach only a tiny audience.

Miss Krausz should be interested to know that some cable systems already offer channels devoted entirely to children's programming—something a network or public television station has never tried.

Several of the correspondents seem to doubt my contention that the public-television audience is disproportionately white, professional, well-to-do and concentrated in the Northeast. My information came from surveys conducted by the Public Broadcasting Service and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. I did not say that all viewers fall into this category, only that a disproportionate number do. Of those who don't, I doubt that many would be left with no reasonable alternative to commercial television if public television were to disappear. HBO executives say they have found fa-

re subscribers in lower-middle-class neighborhoods than they originally expected—apparently because HBO costs much less than other forms of entertainment. A month's subscription is only a little more than a pair of movie tickets. Other cable systems charge comparable rates, which suggests they may find an enthusiastic market among those Americans who do not well-to-do—as public television has not.

William Styron's Auschwitz

John Aldridge suggests that William Styron's overinflated style and "sham metaphysics," in his novel *Sophie's Choice*, derive from the author's inability to give any meaning to Auschwitz ["Styron's Heavy Freight," September]. In *Sophie's Choice*, all the bombast seems necessary to conceal (from the author as well as the reader) the embarrassingly megalomaniacal significance that the novel finally does assign to the Nazi death camps. What, after all, is *Sophie's Choice* about, in the largest context? It's about The Artist as a Young Man; it's a novel of education. And despite the reverential treatment, the whole enormous issue of the death camps is finally compacted into a grotesquely small (in this case) "literary" purport: it is the Experience that enables The Artist to mature (into the Writer of Gigantic Novels).

The appalling ambitiousness of the person who would (albeit unconsciously) appropriate the entire Holocaust to help him grow up is what compels Styron to such longwindedness. The author is not really trying to understand or give meaning to Auschwitz; he is trying desperately to inflate himself to dimensions equal to those of the most enormous of themes.

Perhaps the extent of this desperation is most evident in that passage in which the vapid Stingo gets to perform in the manner of sexual gymnastics with the deep and tortured Sophie. In this utterly unpleasant scene—in which we are treated to the spectacle of the artist, already possessing the Holocaust in a masturbatory fantasy—Styron has finally succeeded in justifying George Meyer's worst fears.

DANIEL DeNICOLA
Northampton, Mass.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 1979



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THE RAGE AGAINST THE FUTURE

Further reflections on the national consensus of anger

by Lewis H. Lapham

When Pythagoras established the theorem of the square upon the hypotenuse, he sacrificed 1,000 oxen to Apollo. Since then, whenever anyone has had a new idea, oxen everywhere have trembled.

—old saying

THE UNITED NATIONS last January proclaimed 1979 the International Year of the Child, and for the past ten months I have been receiving press notices from institutions anxious to display their concern for the suffering inflicted on so many of the world's children. The same announcements presumably go to every other editor in the country, to newspaper and magazine offices as well as to the television networks, the White House, the Library of Congress, and the sponsors of theater benefits and charity balls. I don't know how these proclamations of sympathy have been received in other quarters, but I can no longer bear to read beyond the first few paragraphs of unctuous preamble, in which the publicists profess their amazement that even in the United States, here among the shopping malls and real-estate deals, some 17 million children live in ignorance and squalor. I gather from the texts that upwards of 250 private institutions have undertaken to minister to neglected and abused children not otherwise classified as wards of the state. If I multiply the number of organizations by a factor sufficiently large to account for the children subject to the rule of a government agency, then it is probably reasonable to conclude that the society has come to look upon the existence of its children as a social evil, comparable to the pollution in the Hudson River or crime in the New York subways, rather than as the em-

bodiment of the nation's strength and its only hope of rescue. As with the need for immense ministries of justice in societies renowned for the practice of injustice, the proliferation of institutions attests not only to the rising levels of anger and fear but also to the society's incapacity to solve whatever problem so many institutions have been called forth to ponder and alleviate.

I don't think it necessary to dwell at any length on the proofs of the American grudge against children. During the past several months *Harper's* has published a number of articles dealing with aspects of the war between the generations, various authors bearing witness to the prosperity of the markets in child pornography, the decay of the schools, the declining standard of literacy, the rising incidence, among children and adolescents, of alcoholism, drug addiction, abortion, and suicide. The newspapers in New York publish perfunctory accounts of children beaten, raped, or murdered. In Hollywood the producers of popular movies portray children as agents of the anti-Christ, and, in some California schools, under the rubric of sexual liberation, seventh- and eighth-grade students study the four philosophies of masturbation—"traditional," "religious," "natural," and "radical."

The question remains as to why so many people have become so bitterly resentful of the very idea of a future. Of their rage there can be no doubt, but rage against what? It has become commonplace to speak of the future as of something dark and unclear, as if the next ten or twenty years constituted a racial minority or a monstrous womb likely to give birth to mutant and crawling things barely recognizable as

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human. This unhappy attitude of mind reveals itself in the foreclosures recommended by the militant environmentalists, who speak of windmills as zero growth with the satisfaction field commanders tabulating blood counts, in the campaign speeches of politicians promising to restore the country to the arcadia of 1935, in the querulous voices of the neoconservative social critics who mock the fertility of a generous impulse or no aspiration. The consensus of anger expresses itself in more palpable form, most obviously in the rate of inflation, the depreciation of the currency, and the eagerness on the part of the relentlessly acquisitive society to spend as much money as possible in the shortest possible time. Like the rising price of gold, the steadily higher prices paid for objects (real estate, paintings, furniture, antique automobiles, ballistic missiles) reflect a preference for investment in the safety of the past.

Coinciding with the political and economic resentment, the intellectual fashion insists upon the making of ceremonial moans about Armageddon, dying seas, and the end of the world. Every now and then I go to one of those convocations at which augurs loan from the literary or academic professions peer anxiously into the tombs of time future and make disingenuous guesses about the shape of things to come. The guests and delegates pay as much as \$500 a day to assemble in the grand ballroom of a Hyatt-Regency Hotel and listen to the latest news about the dwindling reserves of oil and the loss of public confidence in Congress and the media. I never attend one of these conferences without a feeling of embarrassment. The participants remind me of novices recent-

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THE EASY CHAIR

inducted into the drugstore mysteries of a California religion, and it makes me uneasy to listen to their confessions of Oedipal humiliation. Their visions of the future compare in subtlety to the plot of *Star Wars*. In the same way that the movie presents a slight revision of World War II movies about the naval war in the Pacific (with a little additional dialogue and a few modifications of the set), so also the conferences held under such titles as "An Energy Overview: The Next Generation" consist almost entirely of recapitulations of the recent past. I had attended several of these convocations before I understood that the participants had no interest in the future except as a pretext for staging a dramatic form of group therapy, the uniform projections of disaster allowing those present to give voice to their secret and nameless dread. To the extent that the intellectual classes feel excluded from the revolutionary achievements of the age (in the sciences and the technologies) they make of their unhappiness a general historical principle. Their indifference to mathematics inspires them to write elegiac odes about the dehumanization of art, the defeat of the humanities, and the abolition of man. If the future doesn't look like themselves, and if they cannot descry its lineaments in the mirror, then the future doesn't exist.

The television and newspaper press obliterate all thought of the future by absorbing itself in the hectic enthusiasms of yesterday afternoon. The watery instability of public opinion follows from the absence of memory and the foreshortened spans of attention characteristic not only of children but also of nations rich enough to afford the luxuries of the patented self-renewal sold by the dealers in cosmetics and religion. The press, like an interior decorator, every few years rearranges the intellectual and emotional furniture, offering constitutional certainties and electing opinions to the office of revealed truth for a matter of weeks or months. In the spring and summer of 1976 the *New York Times* thought that it had discovered in Jimmy Carter the savior of the Republic. The columnists welcomed Mr. Carter's Presidential candidacy with the bows and obeisances of court eunuchs giving way before the carriage of the King of

Spain. The editors of both the news and editorial pages filled their columns with encomiums and applause. Their enthusiasm soon palled, and now the paper smiles its courtier's smile on the magnificence of Sen. Edward Kennedy. The news editors make space on the front pages for the Senator's photograph, and the columnists chatter about the majesty of the lost Camelot. The violent shifts of emotion to which the press so often and so easily falls victim probably account for its increasingly androgynous or homosexual tone of mind. Having broken off diplomatic relations with both the past and the future, the homosexual, like the Irish or Palestinian terrorist, drifts through the abyss of time, trying on costumes and disguises, identifying himself first with one cause and then with another, playing hide-and-seek behind the dream figures floating in the polymorphous void.

IF SOMETHING OF this same instability has weakened the press, so also it has weakened the ministerial classes charged with the conduct of commercial and political affairs. Over the past three or four years I have become accustomed to listening to corporate and government officials complain about their impotence and lack of definition. They occupy spacious offices on the highest tiers of authority, the recipients of annual salaries equivalent to what Lorenzo de Medici paid for all the paintings in the Pitti Palace, presiding over bureaucracies more populous than Goethe's Weimar, and yet, no matter how heavily encumbered with titles and prerogatives, they describe a curious feeling of weightlessness. They say that the palpable fleshliness of power eludes them, as if it had vanished into a black hole, and they complain of being entombed within a symbolic play that has come to resemble a performance in the Japanese *No* theater. Although I can feel a degree of sympathy for these gentlemen, I cannot help wondering what they expected to find in the darkness at the top of the stairs. Did they hope to enjoy the sweet cruelties of Nero or Genghis Khan? Do they feel themselves cheated because, unlike Emperor William II of Germany, they cannot command that a wall be knocked down in Jeru-

salem in order that they might ride on horseback into that city rather than on foot? Their complaints strike me a little more than the discovery that the world is not self and that even the largest of institutions cannot keep the future at bay. In 1890 John D. Rockefeller might have been said to understand the mechanics of the international oil trade. The business was so small enough, and he didn't have to bother with the political and economic computations made necessary by the rates of exchange between American democracy and Iranian despotism or between Swiss francs and Saudi Arabian riyals. But in 1979 the grantees of the Mobil Oil Corporation feel themselves at a loss to guess what might happen next week in Washington or the Persian Gulf, and so their publicists, writing under the persona of an enraged "oil person," buy space in the nation's newspapers to fulminate against the stupidity of the government, the media, and the universities. The intensity of their anger corresponds to the intensity of their feebleness. The same trembling rage apparently prompted the authorities at the State Department to make so loud and so ineffectual a display of preventing Lyudmila Vlasova, the wife of the ballet dancer who defected from the Soviet Union, from being abducted in to the Russian seraglio. By delaying the departure of the lady's aircraft for a period of three days, the State Department presumably meant to advertise the firmness of its capitalist resolve, but it succeeded only in dramatizing its inability to negotiate a satisfactory SALT agreement or formulate a response to the Soviet presence in Cuba and Africa.

The consensus of anger testifies to the collapse over the past thirty years of the secular religions, most notably Marxism, psychoanalysis, and literary criticism. As the doctrines of salvation have become both small and beautiful, so also they have become exclusive (like country clubs or the clientele accepted by this year's hairdresser), centering on the persons of local saint and heroes. From the metaphysical catastrophe of the 1960s, Gloria Steinem and Ralph Nader salvaged fragments of the cross; so did Jane Fonda, Werner Erhard, Buckminster Fuller and countless other figures of woodland romance. Their followers have

ered around the bonfires of the irreligious factions that now divide the public debate into vehement logical disputes about the onerous issues of gun control, abortion, race, health, nuclear energy, the environment. Beyond all else followers demand the safety and rity of fixed truths. The substance he doctrine matters less than the lation that the world can be painted in the primary colors of good and and that it can be divided, like the soldiers in a child's nursery, into armies of us and them. As much as devotees revel in the knowledge their cause is just and their dogma sputably right, they take greater sure in knowing that everybody in the world is so obviously and indisputably wrong. They alone have granted the terrestrial franchise the truth, and it is against the parians, the outcast, and the nurse they must defend the truth from g soiled. The multiplicity of forms den in the unknown future threatens purity of their abstractions in the way that the mockeries and dirty ds of other children threaten the ion that the dollhouse is the castle he elves.

THE RAGE against the future arises from the war between the generations for the privileges of childhood. Men and women in their forties contend for domination in the kingdoms of the deament store and the mail-order catalogue, uttering the hoarse cries of bat (sometimes sexual, more often urban variants on the primal am) in their wrestling for the lable toys and attention. The furi-changes of mind once described antrums and generally associated citizens under the age of six now oy the name of a passionate confor politics. The precepts of child-ing pass through fashionable reon every few years because the ents have no wish to define themselves. They prefer to continue the e of let's pretend, trying on new hes and incarnations, hiding from nurse who, like the angel of death, es looking for them in the park. y stamp their feet and give way to petulant rages of people asking, in ct, the most primitive of questions—

"I'm not immortal, which is very unfair, and so why shouldn't I do as I please?"

To people so reluctant to make peace with their own mortality, children present themselves not only as expensive enemies but also as *memento mori*. The rate of inflation makes it impossible to know what a child might cost four or five years hence in the way of housing, subsistence, and education. Even worse, who knows what a child might say or do? The child confronts his parents, as well as the society at large, with the knowledge of their own failures. Who can rely on a child not to go around humiliating people, to maintain the fragile ecosystems of social self-esteem?

In a society imbued with the sense of its inadequacy, children present themselves as victims over whom even the powerless hold power. The newspapers report the most extreme instances of abuse and neglect, usually on the part of parents who themselves have fallen victim to the cruelties of poverty, illiteracy, and disease. But the same hostility shows up in the more affluent and supposedly more enlightened neighborhoods, most particularly in the pretense, evident in the California schools and in the severity of the criminal laws pertaining to adolescents, that children can be safely assigned the roles of adults. In the generation prior to the French Revolution the aristocracy became obsessed with a fear of its children. The aristocrats infatuated with Rousseau's doctrine of the goodness of the natural man subjected their children to routine beatings and locked them in cellars. Perhaps they felt the *ancien régime* falling into ruins and knew themselves incapable of making the sun stand still.

What happens to people who feel the obligations to children too terrible to bear or to contemplate? They can give birth to a child, but what then can they do for the child? The less they feel that can be done, the more intense their feeling of resentment; the more frightening the responsibility, the more desperate the wish to avoid it.

The uncertainties and confusions of the modern world make it more likely that larger numbers of people will feel themselves inadequate to the task of regeneration, but this begs the question as to what anybody ever has been able to do for a child. Who could protect a

child from the Black Death or Caligula's greed? Perhaps the mistake has been to promise too much, to think that the future could be bought instead of earned. This is a political question, comparable within the politics of the family to the questions within the politics of the nation as to what it is possible to give a citizen of the state. Like most politicians, most parents make campaign promises, postponing delivery on their effort and affection until after next week's party or next month's divorce. Instead of taking the time and the trouble to cherish and instruct the child, the parent buys him another present and sends him off to an expensive school. The future unfortunately cannot be bought, not even for the prices paid at F.A.O. Schwarz and Harvard University. Under the ministrations of the many charitable institutions and government agencies established for the purpose, an American education, at no matter what level of pretension, has become a piece of shoddy goods, roughly comparable in its workmanship to a Cadillac Seville or a condominium in Key Biscayne. Nor does the gift of money and land guarantee the assurance of an inheritance. Given the present rate of inflation, the worth of the currency in the next ten years might attain parity with the Italian lira.

Of what then does patrimony consist? I would guess that it encompasses a sense of the alliance between the generations and of the human balancing act performed in the circus of history. The child stands on the shoulders of the generations that preceded him, and he must be encouraged to believe in his own inestimable worth, to know that what he sees from that precarious height and point of vantage is precious to the people standing below him. The world, mercifully, is not oneself. Neither is the future. It is more creative, more beautiful and strange, than can be imagined by the past. The character and destiny of a nation's children constitute, more than oil or coal or political philosophy, the greatest of its natural resources. But in order for a child to know this, and to form the judgment and independence of mind on which the rest of the troupe depends, he requires the strength and example of parents willing to renounce their own childhoods. □

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THE ARMS OVERSTOCK

Canceled orders, repossessed items, will sacrifice

by Michael T. Klare

ON JUNE 26, America's top arms-trade official, Lt. Gen. Ernest Graves of the Defense Security Assistance Agency, met with industry representatives in Washington, D.C., to discuss the Middle East. The breakfast, sponsored by the American Defense Preparedness Association (a lobby for U.S. defense contractors), was billed as a dialogue on "the latest issues and problems in the foreign military sales arena." Obviously this topic commanded a following in the defense community, because by 7:15 A.M. the Georgetown Room of Marriott's Key Bridge Motel was filled with executives representing the nation's largest arms producers. After thanking these officials for braving long gas lines (then at their peak in Washington), Graves told his audience what it most wanted to hear: that despite the debacle in Iran, Washington had no intention of cutting back on arms exports to the Middle East. "The theme I have to convey to you," Graves told the attentive executives, "is that today arms transfers continue to constitute a vital element of the conduct of our foreign policy."

It is easy to understand why so many industry officials turned up for Graves's presentation. For six years Iran had proved a bonanza for American arms producers. In his haste to create the Middle East's most powerful arsenal, Shah Muhammad Riza Pahlavi had ordered \$19 billion worth of U.S. arms between 1973 and 1978, and had brought in American defense contractors to help modernize his military forces. And this was to be just the beginning: in August, 1978, the

shah gave the White House a new shopping list with an additional \$15 billion in arms requests, and began negotiating for the purchase of still other weapons not yet off the drawing boards. It all must have seemed like an arms merchant's dream come true—but the euphoria died abruptly. On January 16, 1979, the shah was forced into exile, and Iran's new rulers announced that all outstanding arms orders would be canceled.

The shah's departure, and the subsequent cancellation of \$12 billion in Iranian arms purchases, obviously shocked the U.S. defense industry. Not only were American firms left holding billions of dollars worth of half-completed weapons, but they faced the loss of many more billions in future sales. Moreover, sales to other countries were jeopardized because the discount prices once permitted by large Iranian orders had to be abandoned. And added to this there was the frightening spectacle of 10,000 U.S. military technicians—employed as advisers on Iranian arms projects—being forced to leave the country on mass-evacuation flights.

IF THE SHAH'S DEPARTURE produced only gloom in the U.S. defense community, it should have provided at least some relief for President Carter. As a candidate, Mr. Carter had criticized the Iranian arms program and pledged to reduce U.S. military sales abroad. At one point, he condemned those U.S. officials—no names were mentioned, but the reference to Henry Kissinger was obvious—who "try to justify this unsavory business on the cynical ground that by rationing out the means of violence we can somehow control the world's violence." Upon entering the White

House, he proclaimed a "policy of arms restraint" to reduce U.S. military exports to non-NATO nations. Scarcely had the new policy been announced, however, when Mr. Carter felt compelled to override his own restrictions in order to push through several major arms deals negotiated by Presidents Nixon and Ford. Under pressure from the State and Defense departments, Carter authorized the sale of seven sophisticated radar control planes to Iran, and of 200 fighters to Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia. Because of these and other controversial transactions, U.S. arms exports rose by 20 percent during the first two years of the Carter Administration—leading some critics to denounce the President in much the same language that Carter once used to denounce Kissinger.

The Iranian cancellations offered Mr. Carter a chance to recover his "arms restraint" policy. But Mr. Carter as President discovered something that had not been so apparent when he was a candidate: that booming arms sales have created special interests in both government and industry that can close ranks to block any reduction in military exports. This bloc can enlist the support of Congressmen representing districts with major defense industries, as well as economic officials worried about the growing decline in America's overseas trade balance. Added to these concerns was the fear voiced by some diplomats that developments in Iran, Ethiopia, and Afghanistan have created an "area of instability" in the Middle East that invites Soviet intervention unless Washington takes action to strengthen pro-U.S. governments. Unable to counter these pressures, Mr. Carter overlooked his earlier promises and agreed to seek new buyers to compe-

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te for the loss of the market in Iran. Mr. Carter acted expeditiously to avert any risk of decline in military exports. First, he ordered the Pentagon to buy back some of the arms already in production for Iran. Next, he sent General Graves and Defense Secretary Harold Brown to the Middle East to find new customers for the remaining equipment on the order books. Finally, in April, he approved a \$4.5-billion arms package for Egypt and Israel that began a new boom in the defense industry. Thus, by the time Graves met with U.S. arms executives in June, he could assure them that military exports would remain at record levels despite the Iranian cancellations.

Any hope of salvaging Carter's arms restraint policy has apparently disappeared forever. "What we are doing," Sen. William Proxmire (D-Isc.) said recently, "is a return to an old state of mind. In peace or during periods of tension, weapons are the answer." Even critics like Senator Proxmire agree, however, that President Carter was sincere in his commitment to reduced arms sales. Now, then, was this commitment shattered? To answer this question, it is necessary to review the consequences of arms sales to Iran.

PRIOR TO 1972, U.S. sales to Iran under the Pentagon's Foreign Military Sales program rarely exceeded \$100 million per year. Then in 1973 the Shah presented the first of what became a series of billion-dollar "shopping lists" for U.S. arms. Weapons sales to Iran jumped from \$473 million in 1972 to \$2.2 billion in 1973, and then soared to \$4.3 billion a year later. Iranian spending remained at the \$2-billion level over the next two years, then shot up again in 1977 to a record \$5.7 billion. All told, the Shah ordered \$19.5 billion worth of U.S. arms between 1972 and 1978. One U.S. Congressman has called it "the most rapid buildup of military power under peacetime conditions of any nation in the history of the world."

Not only did the Shah order large quantities of U.S. arms, but he also selected America's most sophisticated weapons. The Shah's preference for technical and expensive equipment is evident in his aircraft purchases.

"Some men take *Playboy* to bed," an American familiar with the Imperial Palace once observed. "The Shah takes *Aviation Week & Space Technology*." In 1972, he ordered 169 Northrop F-5E supersonic fighters and 108 McDonnell-Douglas F-4 Phantom fighter-bombers at a combined cost of more than \$1 billion. Next, in 1974, he ordered 80 Grumman swing-wing F-14 Tomcat fighters armed with Phoenix guided missiles, jointly considered the deadliest airborne weapon in the U.S. arsenal. Deliveries of these aircraft had scarcely begun when, in 1977, he ordered 160 General Dynamics F-16 air combat planes—a weapon specifically designed for NATO forces—plus the seven surveillance planes. And even these prodigious orders did not satiate the Shah's appetite for advanced jets: in 1978 he presented the White House with still more orders, which reportedly included 70 F-14s, 140 more F-16s, 31 late-model F-4s armed with Strike guided missiles, and 15 Boeing 707 and 747 transports for use as aerial tankers. These orders, if fulfilled, would have given the Shah the fourth or fifth most powerful air force in the world.

THIS SPECTACULAR INCREASE in the quantity and quality of arms sold to the Shah was the result of a decision made by President Nixon in 1969 to convert Iran into a surrogate police power in the Persian Gulf. Britain, which had previously served as the guardian of Western interests in the area, announced in late 1968 that it could no longer perform this mission; and since the United States was too encumbered in Vietnam to assume this role itself, Nixon decided, on the basis of a study submitted by Henry Kissinger, that a local power would have to do the job. At this point the Shah—who had always hoped to establish Iranian dominion in the Gulf—volunteered his country for the necessary peace-keeping roles. In return for steady infusions of U.S. arms, Iran would henceforth serve as the "guardian and protector" of the West's oil supplies.

The U.S.-Iranian partnership was confirmed in May, 1972, when Nixon and Kissinger flew to Teheran and offered the Shah his choice of America's advanced weaponry. In approving

these arms sales, Nixon was motivated largely by strategic considerations: If Teheran was to serve as the American surrogate in the Persian Gulf, it obviously needed modern weapons. But then came the OPEC price increase of 1974, and Washington discovered new motives for boosting U.S. sales to Iran: to reduce deficits in U.S. balance-of-payments accounts, to recycle Iranian petrodollars into the American economy, and to generate income for the depressed aerospace industry. Nixon rapidly lifted remaining restraints on military exports to Iran, and encouraged American arms firms to sell their wares to the Shah. The stampede to Teheran was on, as the Senate Foreign Relations Committee noted in a 1976 report on military sales to Iran:

The 1972 sales decision, coupled with the increase in Iranian revenues following the quadrupling of oil prices, created a situation not unlike that of bees swarming around a pot of honey. Defense industries, both U.S. and foreign, rushed to Iran to persuade the government to procure their products.

The resulting boom in arms transfers to Iran had unforeseen consequences. To begin with, the Shah lacked sufficient trained personnel to operate and maintain the lavish gear he was importing from the West, and so had to recruit thousands of foreign technicians to manage the Iranian war machine—thus arousing the hostility of Iranians, both military and civilian, who felt that their culture was being subverted by Western values. In their rush to line up arms contracts, many U.S. firms elected to "cut corners" by providing substantial bribes to Iranian procurement officials—thereby fostering corruption and undermining the royal family, which was directly implicated in some of the more conspicuous "kickback" schemes. Finally, by failing to curb his passion for expensive weapons once Iranian oil revenues began to drop in 1975, the Shah boosted inflation and reduced social spending—thus antagonizing those lower- and middle-class Iranians who suffered a decline in their standard of living. This economic resentment combined with religious animosities to spark the revolution of 1978-79.

If the Shah can be said to have become addicted to the import of arms, then it is no less true that his suppli-

ers became addicted to the export of arms. Sustained by steadily rising Iranian orders, U.S. arms exports rose from \$500 million per year in the Fifties and Sixties to an average of \$15 billion in the late Seventies. As a result, many firms that once worked exclusively for the Department of Defense—like Northrop—now find that 50 percent or more of their income is derived from foreign sales. This, in turn, means that jobs—an estimated 350,000 of them—and thus the economic well-being of many American communities, have become dependent on military exports. At the same time, other camp followers have become attracted to the arms caravan: the Treasury Department naturally seeks to recover as many petrodollars as possible from Middle Eastern oil producers; the Commerce Department seeks to improve the U.S. economy through increased export sales; the State Department seeks to improve relations with emerging military powers abroad; and the Defense Department seeks to lower its own weapons costs by shifting some of the expense for research and development to foreign buyers. Having grown accustomed to yearly export sales of \$15 billion, it became almost impossible for these interests to contemplate any reduction in U.S. military sales. As Rep. Gerry Studds (D-Mass.) observed in 1978: "The forces arrayed against any effort by any President to turn around a policy of such force and such long standing as U.S. arms-sales policy are truly awesome."

When the shah fled in January, 1979, the question facing the White House was not how far U.S. exports could be reduced, but how to fill the enormous vacuum created by the loss of America's number one arms customer. The problem divided into three parts: first, what to do with the weapons in production; second, where to find buyers for all the other weapons ordered by Iran; and third, how to compensate for the loss of future sales to Iran. A fourth, somewhat conflicting aspect of the problem arose later: what to do with the advanced arms delivered to Iran prior to 1979 and now, lacking spare parts and skilled maintenance, rusting away in Iranian arsenals.

The first of these problems proved relatively simple to solve. The Iranian government had made substantial pro-

gress payments on all work underway as of December, 1978, so no company was actually holding the bag for money spent on half-completed weapons. In accordance with U.S. sales procedures, the Iranians had deposited \$500 million in the Foreign Military Sales Trust Fund to cover such contingencies. "Because of the precautions we take in foreign military programs," one Pentagon official said in February, "no American company is going to go under" as a result of the Iranian revolution.

As originally conceived, the purpose of the trust fund is to assure an orderly stopping of work on canceled arms programs. Rather than cancel the Iranian programs, however, the White House decided to use these funds to continue work on some projects in the expectation of finding other buyers for the completed items. In February, President Carter asked Congress to approve a supplemental defense appropriation of \$765 million to permit the military to buy some of the Iranian merchandise for its own use. In particular, Mr. Carter proposed that the Navy purchase two of the four Spruance-class destroyers under construction at Litton's Pascagoula, Mississippi, shipyards for a total cost of \$750 million—far less than it would cost to build new ones from scratch. Although some Congressional leaders hailed the move as an opportunity to acquire additional warships at what appeared to be bargain-basement prices, others doubted the value of the Litton destroyers, which had been built to the shah's specifications and would thus need extensive—and expensive—modifications to meet U.S. standards.

Having resolved the immediate problem of disposing of the ships already in production, the Administration turned its attention to the problem of lining up new customers for all the other equipment ordered by Iran. This task coalesced with the Administration's third objective: finding customers for all the future orders no longer forthcoming from Iran. Rather than write these orders off the books altogether, which would have resulted in a substantial and prolonged decline in U.S. military exports, Mr. Carter ordered the Defense Department to find substitute buyers. As the first step in this campaign, Secretary Brown and General Graves were sent

to the Middle East in February with orders to dispose of as much of the canceled Iranian merchandise as possible.

BROWN'S TRIP—the first undertaken by a U.S. Secretary of Defense to the Middle East—was not officially described as an arms-trade mission. Evidently, his task was to reassure Western governments that the United States remains a credible ally despite its inability to save the shah. But each of the four countries (Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, and Egypt) that he visited, Brown and Graves met with military officials to discuss future arms transactions. This aspect of the travels was rarely mentioned in public, but on one notable occasion Brown delivered an unabashed advertisement for U.S. arms: speaking before Saudi air and military cadets, he proclaimed that "we can provide the best training and equipment in the world. We will do so."

Brown followed up on this offer with meetings with Saudi defense officials. Saudi Arabia already has some \$8 billion in outstanding orders—mostly for construction work on air and navy facilities and for sixty F-15 fighters ordered in 1978—and its capacity to absorb additional weaponry is considered limited; nevertheless, Brown reportedly negotiated sales of additional guided missiles (to arm the F-15s and other U.S. aircraft in the Saudi inventory) and of infantry supplies and technical support for the fast-growing Saudi Arabian National Guard, the kingdom's principal internal security force. General Graves later told armaments executives at the June breakfast meeting that total Saudi orders in 1979 should equal or surpass the \$4.1 billion recorded in 1978.

While in Riyadh, Brown also worked out details of the U.S.-Saudi plan to provide North Yemen with U.S. arms. The North Yemenis, who are closely allied with Saudi Arabia, have periodically been attacked by South Yemen, whose Marxist leaders are allied with Moscow (both Yemen border Saudi Arabia on the south). Under the agreement worked out by Brown, the Saudis will provide \$39 million to cover the transfer to North Yemen of twelve Northrop F-5E fighters, two Lockheed C-130 Hercules

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cargo planes, sixty-four Chrysler M-60 tanks, and 100 armored carriers. Brown also agreed to provide technical assistance to the inexperienced Yemenis in operating this material.

In accordance with the Arms Export Control Act of 1976, the Yemen package should have been submitted to Congress for review, and possible veto. In late February, however, South Yemen forces invaded and occupied several North Yemen towns along the two countries' disputed border, prompting Mr. Carter to invoke emergency provisions of the 1976 measure that allow him to bypass Congressional review. The President's tactics were praised by some in Congress who thought that a "show of force" was needed to demonstrate U.S. determination to block any Soviet attempt to exploit the instabilities created by the Iranian revolution, but were criticized by others who argued that the Yemen crisis did not warrant such preemptory action—particularly since the two Yemens had agreed, on the eve of Mr. Carter's action, to respect a cease-fire negotiated by the Arab League. On March 15, Rep. Leon Panetta of California introduced a concurrent resolution protesting the President's plan on the grounds that "this action denies to the Congress an opportunity to examine all relevant facts in the Yemen war and to determine whether making this kind of major new commitment to North Yemen is in the best interests of the nation."

The Yemen deal was not the only new commitment Brown made while in Riyadh. In another package to be funded by the Saudis, he agreed to supply Sudan with twelve F-5E fighters and other U.S. munitions. Sudan's rulers, concerned by the fighting in neighboring Ethiopia and worried about possible interference by Libya, which has been implicated in two recent coup attempts, had long requested U.S. military assistance. Presumably the \$140-million F-5E package will be followed by other Saudi-financed arms transfers.

Brown also agreed to provide additional arms to Oman, which lies astride the strategic Strait of Hormuz, through which most oil tankers pass on their way to the West. Like other conservative Arab monarchs, Oman's Sultan Qaboos was deeply shaken by the revolution in Iran (which faces Oman from across the narrow strait),

and he reportedly requested from U.S. officials small arms and internal security material.

Neither Yemen, the Sudan, nor Oman is likely to grow into a major military market on the scale of Iran, but each is confronted with domestic and international threats and thus will have an escalating need for modern weapons. And while none of these countries has traditionally been considered a close ally of the United States, U.S. determination to export weapons to the Middle East will probably result in a steadily expanding arms-supply arrangement—despite the risk that pro-U.S. leaders in all three could be replaced by radical Muslim forces.

FOLLOWING HIS VISIT to Saudi Arabia, Brown flew to Jordan, Israel, and Egypt—each of which requested additional U.S. arms. Brown reportedly told leaders of these countries that any action on these requests would have to await completion of the then-pending Mideast peace treaty, but suggested that Washington would be sympathetic to all reasonable requests. While in Jerusalem, however, he solved one of the remaining problems from the Iranian crisis: what to do with the fifty-five General Dynamics F-16 fighters that had already entered production when the shah fled in January. Since the Israelis are also scheduled to receive F-16s—but not, under the original production plan, until 1983—Brown worked out a deal whereby Israel will receive the first installment on its order from the Iranian batch of fifty-five. (By canceling its F-16 order, Iran's revolutionary government, which has come out strongly in support of the PLO and the hard-line Arab states, will, ironically, contribute to Israel's growing air superiority.)

Most of Brown's conversations in Jerusalem and Cairo focused, however, on how these countries will spend the money they would receive in conjunction with the peace accord. Although the treaty itself had not been fully written yet, Brown indicated which weapons the United States would make available once the treaty was signed and ratified. As finally announced in April, the deal includes \$2.2 billion in arms credits for Israel

and another \$1.5 billion worth for Egypt, plus a grant of \$800 million for Israel to help finance the relocation of two air bases from the Sinai to the Negev. (These funds, it should be noted, are in addition to the \$1–\$2 billion per year in military aid already committed to these countries.)

Although most Congressional leaders applauded Mr. Carter's negotiation of the peace treaty, support for arms sales was less than unanimous. Some critics said that the transfer of still more weapons to the Middle East would only encourage a new arms race (fears that were given added credibility in April, when Moscow agreed to provide Syria with additional arms to compensate for the late Israeli acquisitions), and thus increase the killing in any future wars. "This is not like throwing a lighted match into a gasoline tank," Senator Proxmire observed in May, "but it is like adding more gasoline to a tank that has exploded in flaming destruction over and over in the past few years. However welcome the treaty, he added, "the payment should not include a new round of the arms race in the Middle East dressed as the dove of peace."

DESPITE SUCH CRITICISM, the arms sales easily won Congressional approval when submitted to a vote in May. Neither Israel nor Egypt has fully indicated how they will spend these additional credits, but their general preferences are well known. Israel sees seventy-five more F-16s, advanced air-to-air missiles, tanks and armored carriers, and surveillance gear to ward off any impending Arab attack. Egypt wants combat gear—including tank, supersonic fighters, armored carrier submarines, and destroyers. (In July the Pentagon announced that Israel would use its first treaty funds to buy 800 armored personnel carriers, 200 M-60 tanks, and 200 self-propelled 155-mm howitzers, and Egypt will receive 35 F-4E Phantom fighter-bombers, 750 armored carriers, and other military vehicles.)

The \$4.5-billion treaty package represents just the beginning of what are expected to be multimillion-dollar arms-modernization programs by Israel and Egypt. Israeli Defense Minister Ezer Weizman last year gave Brown

2-billion arms request known as Matmon-C (Matmon is the Hebrew word for "treasure"). President Sadat requested weapons costing \$8 billion when Brown visited Egypt in February. Neither country is likely to get everything it wants (Egypt, for instance, is not likely to receive any offensive arms that will threaten Israel), but both will prove steady customers for U.S. weapons suppliers. There is no talk in Washington of converting Egypt into a "substitute surrogate" in the Middle East, to perform the peacekeeping duties once assumed by Iran. According to reporters who accompanied Brown on his Middle East journey, President Sadat himself proposed such an arrangement when the Secretary was in Cairo.) And while U.S. officials deny that any such plan is under consideration, the White House reportedly has agreed to provide Sadat with counterinsurgency gear and other equipment suitable for police operations in North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula.

The Egypt-Israeli arms agreements, coupled with promises of future deals, pulled the U.S. arms industry out of post-Iran depression. Most producers report that despite the loss of their Iranian programs, business is as brisk as ever. "When you look at the \$25 billion [F-16] program we have now," a spokesman for General Dynamics remarked, the canceled sale to Iran "is not a very significant matter."

And some analysts have suggested that Egypt's requirement for U.S. arms may eventually outstrip Iran's. One aerospace official told Dan Morgan of the *Washington Post* in April: "The beauty of this is that Iran is a drop in the bucket" compared to the Middle East market as a whole. All this is not to suggest that Mr. Carter rushed through the peace treaty solely to rescue the American arms industry. Obviously, there were many compelling reasons for pushing the accords to completion—not the least of which was a desire to restore some peace and security to the Middle East following the upheaval in Iran. But it is also clear that U.S. plans to enlist both Israel and Egypt in future efforts to stabilize the region will require continuing supply of American arms, ensuring steady business for U.S. producers.

With the task of finding alternative markets for all the weapons once des-

tined for Iran now largely completed, U.S. officials could turn to the remaining problem: what to do with all the arms sold to the shah prior to his departure in January.

ALTHOUGH THE SHAH'S successors have attempted to keep their less sophisticated arms in working condition, many of the elaborate weapons are rusting in Iranian hangars and depots. Deputy Premier Abbas Amir Entezam reported in March, for instance, that 95 percent of Iran's 900 helicopters are permanently grounded. Lacking the spare parts and trained personnel to put these machines back into operation, Iran's new leaders have offered to sell some of them—including their entire force of F-14 fighters—back to the United States. But while some U.S. officials have suggested that the Department of Defense use this opportunity to augment its own arsenals at discount prices, the weapons industry has resisted the scheme because it would reduce the Pentagon's future needs for these items and thus undermine the companies' long-term profitability. Given the political clout of these arms firms, it is doubtful that the buy-back scheme will ever be implemented.

If the Iranian government fails to find foreign customers for its surplus arms, it will have only two choices: either turn the arsenal into scrap metal, or recruit a new corps of foreign technicians to help put them back in working condition. The import of foreigners will clearly provoke hostility from Iran's conservative Muslim leaders, who had attacked the shah for opening up their country to Western values and influence. But it now appears that the military is willing to risk such opposition to rescue their American weapons from the scrap heap. *Aviation Week* reported in July that Iranian naval officials have proposed that Sikorsky send from forty to eighty technicians to Iran to supervise the repair of RF-53 and SH-3D helicopters in the Iranian inventory. If this plan succeeds, it is likely that the Iranian military will negotiate such arrangements with other U.S. companies once involved in Iranian arms programs. (Recent fighting between the pro-government forces and the autonomy-seeking Kurds has ap-

parently strengthened the position of those Iranian officials who believe that some sort of continuing arms relationship with the United States is essential.)

The arrival of U.S. technicians in Iran, if and when such a plan is approved, will represent a new chapter in the U.S.-Iranian arms relationship. But while it is doubtful that Iran will again become a major customer for U.S. arms, such arrangements demonstrate how hard it is to completely sever ties once a country has become accustomed to receiving a steady supply of modern arms. (The Egyptians, who broke their ties with the Soviet Union in 1974, have encountered much the same problem.) The only way out of this dependency is to purchase arms from many different sources—thereby incurring a certain amount of waste and inefficiency—or to break the "arms habit" altogether. Such action naturally contradicts all the imperatives of "national security" as we have been taught to know them, but on the other hand, Iran demonstrates how the steady accumulation of modern arms diminished, rather than enhanced, the stability of the imperial government. As one U.S. official who witnessed the Iranian upheaval said in February, "F-14s and F-15s won't solve the social, political, and economic problems" that constitute the greatest threat to regional stability in the Middle East.

And if America's overseas military customers might benefit from a reduction in arms spending, the United States might also ask whether it stands to gain from such a change. True, any significant cutbacks in military exports will probably cause dislocations in the arms industry, but this would force these companies to produce other, non-military goods that can attract a more stable market. Furthermore, by restricting the export of arms to shaky governments in the Middle East, the United States would reduce the risk of "another Iran." Finally, all countries stand to gain from a slackening of the Middle East arms race. If, as Senator Proxmire has suggested, sending more U.S. arms is akin to "adding more gasoline" to that volatile tank, common sense counsels us to begin emptying the tank rather than flooding it even further. □

SHADES OF GREENLAND

The appeals of a cursed place

by Simon Winchester

AS OUR JUMBO jet rumbled steadily homeward over the North Atlantic, a stewardess asked me where I had been—a solicitousness born of the passenger load: a mere forty-six of us in a structure built for 300. Greenland, I replied, pointing straight downward, and suggested we were probably passing right over it then. Icebergs, like specks of dandruff on a blue suit, dotted the sea-coast eight miles below. The stewardess became briefly excited.

"Greenland, how neat! We're starting service there next month." I was astonished. Northwest Orient flying to *Simon Winchester is chief American correspondent for the Daily Mail of London.*

Greenland? Where on earth would they land? I asked. "Oh, Reykjavik," the girl replied, and, I am sorry to say, I silently groaned. "No, no, my dear, that's Iceland. Greenland's another place altogether. Quite different."

But she could be forgiven the mistake, perhaps the most common geographical error after the assumptions that Chicago is the capital of Illinois or that Liverpool is farther west than Edinburgh. For a start, Iceland is not particularly icy—just a couple of ice fields that British schoolchildren go cavorting around each summer; and Greenland is not at all green. Erik the Red, having blundered into the greatest public relations disaster of the tenth

century by calling his first discovery Iceland—few followed him there went on to find the bleak, cold, a perpetually icebound island to the west. In best Madison Avenue style he came home and announced that the benighted place was green (for which read, hoped, grassy, tree-blessed, meadow-sweet, and cloaked in verdure). It was none of those things, and though Vikings stormed ashore as fast as the longboats could bring them, the cursed Erik for misleading them shivered in the cold for five centuries and then disappeared.

But green or not, there it sits like the vast right footprint of some massive child, heel slim and pointed down



latitude sixty degrees north, index squa and blunted 400 miles from the Pole. Cape Morris Jesup, the most cherly piece of land in the world, 500 miles from Cape Farewell, a t headland of dour mien and foggy tenance that is well known to the h cod fishermen of the Grand ks, but to few others.

Cartographers' projections have prod some eccentric notions of what island is really like. Mercator ld have us think it is utterly imse, ten times the size of India and r than all America. Lambert's al maps make Greenland curtsy and the mid-Atlantic; the gnomonic ections slim her down at the ern end like some giant white er probing the Atlantic's gray es. But it is big, without a doubt. ed in Europe, it would stretch a Copenhagen to the mid-Sahara. s around the same size as Saudi ia or Zaire; a trifle smaller than Sudan, a little larger than Sinkiang, Queensland. Hardly anyone lives e: just 49,000 rather hardy people wer than on Bermuda or the Isle an, or in the city of Ames, Iowa. ost of the inhabitants are Greeners, a mixed race created in the tenth century by the combination Eskimo hospitality and whaling s' enormous sexual appetites. A pure Eskimos survive in the far h of Greenland and in one village e the east coast; but most people are brid, ruled until last May by their time colonial masters, the Danes. representative of the Danish mon was a colonial governor, complete a hat of ostrich feathers. He has e home now, but 10,000 Danes re—though since May, 1979, in ciple, and from January, 1980, in tice, they have little say in the nining of the great ice-island they en long commanded. In its place has en a half-independent country, appropriately called by its traditional id name *Kalatdlit-Nunat*—the d of Men.

The Danes have had internationally gnized charge of Greenland since ip of a clerk's pen at the Congress ienna. Before 1815, the Norwegians ed the place—Erik the Red was a ing from the Norwegian west coast; Hans Egede, who brought Chrisity to Greenland in 1721, came n northern Norway, too—and prob-

ably would have continued to own it after the Congress of Vienna settlement detached Norway from Denmark. But the clerk forgot to include in the deal some of Norway's overseas possessions, and so Greenland passed to Denmark, where it has remained ever since. After the second world war the Americans halfheartedly asked to buy it, but the Danes, whose sensitivities had been raised after selling the Virgin Islands to Washington at the end of World War I and triggering an almighty row at home, said no, they would hang on to it for the time being.

An independent Greenland—though in truth it is far from wholly free of its ties to Denmark, and may not be for decades yet to come—is all of a sudden an object of recondite fascination. Sociologists wonder how the Greenlanders will use their newfound freedoms. Economists are investigating what the developments may mean for the Common Market, of which Greenland, by its associations with Denmark, is now a full member. And military men wonder, nay worry, whether the developments may be the harbingers of spectacular and profound changes in the strategic potpourri that is the Atlantic Ocean.

ONE OF THESE concerns meant anything to me, though, when I first went to this remarkable country—and fell hopelessly and carelessly in love with her—some fifteen years ago. I was a geologist then; I knew there were basalts in parts of Greenland that learned men were paying well to have brought home to their laboratories; and I was captivated by a paragraph I had read in the *Admiralty's Arctic Pilot, Volume Two*.

The whole of the immense length of coastline of East Greenland is fronted by a huge belt of ice of varying width and density, and this fact must be constantly borne in mind when studying the following pages. There are still great stretches of the coast which have never been approached in a sea-going vessel, and our knowledge of them has been obtained either by voyages in boats or native craft along the partly ice-free zone between the land and the sea-ice, by aircraft reconnaissance, or by

means of sledging journeys over the ice fringing the land.

Admiralty Pilots are great repositories of fantastic adventure for the romantic landlubber—a fact Somerset Maugham, an avid fan and bedtime reader of *Pilots*, would have readily admitted. This passage described a coast not a week's sailing-time away from my university—a coast, moreover, alive with geology. It took no more than six months to find the money and the men to go. Vast caches of pemmican and Cooper's Oxford marmalade, dried potatoes and paraffin, shagreen strips and bamboo ski poles were assembled. A Nansen sled was ordered from a specialist firm in Scotland. Compasses and aerial photographs, waterproof matches and thermal underwear, drilling gear and a large-caliber rifle—all these and more, in wooden boxes three feet long, two feet wide, and one foot deep, were flown to Copenhagen, loaded deep into the hold of a bright red icebreaker named *Thala Dan*. With our party of six still poring over plans, learning how best to fend off polar bears, and salting away those most vital of all pieces of Arctic gear, the pricklers for our Primus stoves, we set sail from Copenhagen on a course north-north-west by west for that "huge belt of ice of varying width and density" that protects East Greenland from the outside world.

In the various Eskimo languages there is no word for *war*, nor for *steal*, but well over a hundred words for snow and another hundred for ice. The same is true for the English language, as it is spoken on the high northern seas. So we sent lookouts aloft to spot the *iceblink*, watched the sea turn *oily*, then develop *ice rind*, then *frail ice* under a curtain of *ice smoke*. A few *groulers* bobbed in the waves, then *bergy bits*, *brash ice*, *rotten ice*, *new ice*, *sludge*, *strips*, *rafts*, *ice*, *rams*, *light flocs*, *pancakes*, *open pack*, *closed pack*: the jargon is bewildering. But as our bow crunched and slammed for 100 miles and three long sunlit days and sunlit nights through the Greenland pack, I began to understand the fascination that ice has for some people, as most memorably expressed by Greenland's best-known explorer, Knud Rasmussen: "Give me winter, give me dogs, and you can have the rest."

I have kept in halfhearted touch with

the other five who went on that memorable trip, and find it not at all surprising that with only one exception, we have all been back to Greenland as often as we could. We had the kind of experiences up in the far north that men rarely encounter unless they are sent to war. One in particular bears repeating, if only to indicate the respect we now pay to the fundamentals of the Arctic life: food, warmth, ice, water, and company.

It was toward the end of the expedition. We were coming over the crest of the final ridge of mountains that lay between us and the thirty-mile-wide stretch of seawater known as Scoresbysund. We were on the south side; a small Eskimo boat, the *Entalik*, was due to meet us and return us to the north side, where *Thala Dan* or one of her sister ships would be waiting to take us back to Denmark. We were heavily laden: our food boxes had been replaced by pouches containing rock samples; each of us carried backpacks weighing sixty pounds; the battered but surviving Nansen sled was dragged along behind.

The weather was getting worse, now that the midnight sun had started to dip below the horizon and the first touches of the Arctic winter brushed us each evening. The night before we had had to soften our climbing boots over the Primus stove, so solid had they frozen. As we crested the final mountain chain, sleet lashed out of the northeast. We longed to be back at base camp.

It was late in the afternoon when our map-reading proved correct, and we heaved ourselves over the basalt ridge and gazed down at the small bay where we had first pitched camp three months before. But what a difference. When we had left, the waters of the fjord were blue and sparkling, dotted with chunks of brilliant white ice. Now the water, for as far as we could see, even with binoculars, was covered with thick ice floes. Huge icebergs stood out in clusters, and there were patches of open water. But from the beach out to the far horizon it was ice, and we were, to put it mildly, beset.

I cranked up the Pye radio, praying that the batteries had not gone bad in the whipping chill gales that had blown up each night. "Cape Tobin radio, Cape Tobin radio," I called into the night. "This is Arctic expedition SN-17

[our call sign, allotted to us by the radio station manager]. Do you hear us?" We waited for ten minutes or so, calling time and again into the hostile night. At first there was just the static, the radio noise of the auroral display that so badly disrupts communications in the high latitudes. But then, faintly at first and more strongly as we finetuned the set, the reply from the distant coastal station. "Expedition SN-17, we hear you—you have a problem, we think."

The ferocious northeasterly gales had driven pack ice far into the fjord about ten days before. The tide crushed it back and forth each day, but was never able to flush it back out into the Atlantic. The cold was turning the sea ice solid again, so within a week or so the fjord would be locked solid for the winter. The *Entalik* had sailed, the radio operator told us: the boat had struggled through the gales, and then through the edge of the ice field, and was now waiting for us, six miles out from where we huddled. "Wait for a few days," the Danish government people were quoted as ordering us. "*Entalik* will wait for you until things get worse."

Food became a problem. Our slender resources, so carefully packed back in England all those months, before, had scarcely any contingency rations: we had so much spare margarine (they make special low-temperature margarine that will stay soft down to forty below, and we were helping promote it) and so many cases of Weetabix breakfast cereal and Cooper's Oxford marmalade that these became the staples of our diet for the ten-day wait. I shot a duck in flight with a .475-magnum elephant gun, which was lucky, to say the very least; and we found some bags of millet in an abandoned hunter's hut. But basically we became bored and hungry as the days went on, and gales grew more and more evil, and the nights darker and icier.

Finally the radio operator told us we had to get out. The *Entalik* was four miles offshore—our huts were visible, the skipper was telling the Cape Tobin station. But the boat could wait no longer: ice was coming in from the north, and the *Entalik* was running the risk of capture, and of being crushed, by the ten-ton floes. We had to walk out to it, or wait out the winter.

THERE WAS REALLY no choice. Not only had we all but run out of food and fuel, but we had finals at Oxford to return to, and I was not about to leave the university without a degree for the sake of a four-mile walk across the ice floes. Looking back on that afternoon, the priorities seem to have been somewhat oddly ordered.

We shinned up the brae behind the camp. True enough, little orange *Entalik*—all coastal vessels in Greenland are painted orange, so they can be seen easily against the glaring ice—was hard up against the ice foot, a tiny dot among the huge chunks of debris from the glaciers. We gathered our boxes of samples—the boxes we had decided to abandon had been piled in a cairn some days before—and lashed them to our backs. Then, roped together and with ice axes firmly grasped in mittened hands, we set off down the beach, gingerly stepping over the tide crack between the ice floes and the land, and then over the crazy-paving of big and little floes in the direction of the Eskimo boat.

It took about five hours to get within hailing distance of the crew. The tide race along Scoresbysund was fast, and the floes were tipping and crashing, against one another, jostling their way a few miles down the fjord as we walked and jumped among them. Sometimes the gap between one floe and another would open, without any warning at all, from a foot to six feet. The water between the ice was dark and menacing. In places the sound was a thousand feet deep, and a plunge into that freezing sea water would kill you in less than a minute. We felt the peril of our journey acutely, and when the orange hull of the *Entalik* appeared from behind an iceberg, and Daniel, the ever-smiling skipper, waved jauntily to us, we let out a great whoop of relief.

But our troubles were not quite over. Between the *Entalik* and our party was a gap of open water perhaps twenty feet across, widening all the time. The *Entalik*'s skipper knew we couldn't hope to jump it, so he turned his sturdy craft, bow-in, against the floe beside which he was parked. He revved up his engine—a single-cycle Perkins diesel that sent perfect smoke rings chugging into the still blue air in wild and magical profusion. He chugged and pushed for a full two hours, and slowly, in

ely slowly, the hundreds of tons of began to move toward us. The gap owed from twenty feet to fifteen, to ten, then eight, then seven, and it stuck. Nothing the little fishing could do would reduce the gap—that lay between us and freedom in what had become an Arctic on. We would have to jump.

me after the other we coiled up the between us, secured the rock on our backs, and belayed each other with ice axes driven deep into the ice. Then the first jump—a long, lumbering run, the pack swaying ominously behind, then up—and over the distant floe, where the Eskimos crept and grabbed the man to prevent him from falling back into the water. Belayed onto the far side—then others jumped, then all of us were on the boat-side, save the expedition leader. He took his leap, found his footing on our floe—and crashed right through the mushy edge, into the water. The nylon rope sang out, tightened, the ice-axe belay stiffened and held. He got his legs wet and shivering, but we hauled him onto the floe into the boat. Ten minutes later the Perkins engine was chugging merrily, a stove was brewing up some ale-meat stew for us in the cramped quarters, and we could see the ice-edge glistening in the distance.

There were other problems before we got home, however. The *Entalvik* encountered more ice, and we had to turn about and go hunting (for seal and walrus-k-ox) on the northern shore; and when we finally made it back to the settlement we found the Copenhagen ship had left without ever making it into the fjord. A bad year for the locals all said—the kind of thing that happens every couple of years, a minor inconvenience to them. I was of course a major one to us.

I was signaled for a little private plane by a pilot over the Denmark Strait from Nuuk: the pilot, a legendary figure named Bjorn Falsson, made it over to a rough grassy strip just as a snowstorm was beginning. His takeoff must have been, in professional terms, exactly dicey; but we were back in Nuuk that night, and eating cream puffs at the Savoy in London the next afternoon. Falsson was killed a few days later, flying into a mountain in the area of north Iceland appropriately named "The Claw."

I have been to Greenland twice since then: once, in 1973, I flew by small plane—I hitchhiked a ride from Frobisher Bay in the Northwest Territories—to the splendidly cozy west Greenland community of Jakobshavn; I went sledding, hunted seal, visited villages that have been abandoned to the wind and the snowdrifts because now they are too costly to maintain. And I went back this year, to look through journalist's eyes at today's Greenland. Compared with the place I had known as a student, and as a curious victim of a strange northern magnetism, my encounter this time was a more sobering experience.

The plane this year was filled with men—and women, though only a few—who seem to care little for the place. Three times a week a Scandinavian Airlines DC-8 takes off from Kastrup airport in Copenhagen for the remote runway in west Greenland at the head of Søndre Strømfjord. Most of the passengers are Danes: on my plane there was a man from Aalborg going to sell suits to Greenlanders; there was the engineer of a coastal icebreaker; there was a hotel waiter going home from leave. The Danes were all bound for a Greenland that offers them enormous financial advantages for a two-year work contract: no taxes, high wages, subsidized living quarters. Almost without exception they hate what they do, and dislike the people they have to do it with.

"Greenland for me is just a place to make money," said one young Dane, a building worker who plans to get married when he finishes his tour. "The weather's bad. The food's lousy. The town is terrible. Sometimes I don't know why I stick it."

And had I not been to Greenland before, I think I could have understood his feelings. Søndre Strømfjord, as an introduction, is wholly without charm. It is an old United States Air Force base (Blue West Eight, of wartime fame) that the Pentagon has relegated to the back row of the world's military bases. It is not without potential importance, but it is located in a dusty valley at the head of a monotonously straight fjord. Its buildings are shacks of gray concrete; the Caribou Club and the Arctic Hotel make feeble attempts to be jolly, but remain grimly institutional. And because the helicopter service that takes passengers on to their

final destinations up and down the west coast is invariably delayed, or because a sudden influx of letters means that all riders must be bumped—the kinds of frustrations that enable the Eskimo word *imaga*, which means "perhaps," to be included in all timetables—most inbound travelers have to spend a night or two stuck in this hellish place. I met a man who had been waiting a week for a flight 100 miles up-country; it would have been quicker to buy a dogsled, only Søndre Strømfjord has none—neither dog nor sled. I was stuck there for a day only, a better-than-average delay, I was told.

Greenland Air, which runs a fleet of Sikorsky helicopters to eighteen communities on the west coast, and to three on the east coast, is one of the world's most expensive airlines. To go from Søndre Strømfjord to Godthaab, the island's capital, takes ninety minutes and costs \$200; workers on contract to the Royal Greenland Trade Department get priority; and the slightest trace of low clouds will prevent the pilots from even considering a takeoff. Yet for all the cost and delay, it remains a tough and courageous little airline: on our way down to Godthaab we hovered fifty feet above the water to track a school of whales; we swooped low over a glacier snout to watch icebergs calving in magnificent slow motion; and we soared high up to the mountaintops to scan the vast emptiness of the inland ice. A few minutes behind schedule at the other end, maybe, but since we were a day late anyway, no one seemed to mind. Up in the Arctic, the pilot explained, we do things a little less formally.

GODTHAAB—GOOD HOPE: and it stands on a cape, though there the similarity to its South African namesake ends—has been the epicenter of Greenland's political and economic development for two and a half centuries, ever since Hans Egede arrived to search for his Viking brothers. He searched in vain—they had all died 200 years before—but he lost no time in converting the "eaters-of-raw-meat" (which is what the word *Eskimo* means throughout the polar regions) into followers of the Lord, rather than of their eccentric shamans. True, he had to tinker with the language of prayer a little to com-

pensate for the Greenlanders' dietary peculiarities ("Behold, the Seal of God," one prayer went; "Give us this day our Daily Meat," went another), but he did what other evangelists might consider a magnificent job: within a decade he had eradicated all traces of shamanism in the west Greenland fjords, summoned the crown-appointed traders from home to barter with these friendly little Mongoloid people, and helped turn Greenland into one of the largest colonies under the rule of a continental European monarch. The Royal Greenland Trading Company ran the ice-bound giant in the name of God and the King of Denmark—starting in the very year that the United States shook itself free from the British dominion, 1776.

The statue of Hans Egede still stands on a gneissic bluff by the old harbor in Godthaab. He looks, be-ruffed and be-staved, over the fjord's ice-dotted water and over the town that Denmark has created on the hills around. He would not, I fancy, be well pleased with what his descendants have wrought. Ten thousand people live there, hemmed in by mountain and by water. The government has housed half of these souls in twenty-two endless blocks of high-rise apartments, all gray cement and broken glass and scuffed paint. There is a hospital and a radio station (even a television station; the news films from Denmark are shown six days late), a couple of expensive hotels and a score of bars. There are youth clubs and churches and missionary halls and a teachers' college. And there are no fewer than 120 sparkling Mercedes taxicabs—of little importance, one might think, to a people who only a generation ago were proud to walk for days through blizzards up on the inland ice. Perhaps because of all the cultural alienation, although delivered courtesy of the Danes' benevolence, there is a suicide rate in Godthaab higher than that of any other city in the world—and a rate of alcoholism that is deeply depressing.

Gustav Hansen—most Greenlanders adopted Danish-sounding names; the priests urged them to, since theirs were so difficult to wrap the clerical tongue around—was born twenty-three years ago in a village near Sukkertoppen, a small fishing community fifty miles north of Godthaab. His father was a sealer. His mother stayed at home.

There was not much money, but life, Gustav recalls with wry regret, was fun. "We would go off to the ice and hunt for ptarmigan and seal. We would fish a lot, for salmon and cod. We had dogs then, and a sled. Life was hand-to-mouth, but we loved it. We were real Greenlanders. Now look at us."

As part of the Danish policy of keeping Greenland as inexpensive as possible to run, Gustav's small village has been closed down. Its people have been moved, first to Sukkertoppen, then to the capital. The price he has paid for suiting the economic imperatives of the civil servants back in Copenhagen is, spiritually, awesome.

He gestured at his new encampment. He has precisely 100 square feet on the second floor of a block that houses 850 fellow Greenlanders. Most of the room is occupied by his bed. A small pile of cardboard boxes, from which spill harpoons, some strips of sealskin, and some blue cotton anoraks, lies beneath the window. A sketch of a man—his father, perhaps—in his kayak is the only decoration. Gustav has work: he helps keep order in a child-care center in another apartment block half a mile away. But he is deeply unhappy, and looks it.

"This is no life. I have been to Denmark, and this place has become just like a Danish city. Our people no longer know how to hunt or catch fish. They have no control over their lives. The Danes came here and want us to be just like them—and all they have succeeded in doing is making an unhappy people who are neither Danes nor Eskimo anymore. People here never laugh. It is a sad town, and it seems so long ago that we were happy."

I overheard an old lady one night, down at the village shop. "Give me some matches," she told the boy behind the counter. "And some fat. And some bread. And a little salt." And then she emptied her purse, and kroner notes and coins cascaded onto the counter. "And with the rest—beer." The boy counted the money, did some thumb-licking subtraction, turned to a table pinned up on the wall for just such contingencies—and told the old woman she could get forty cans of beer. I last saw her struggling up the mountainside, her wilted bag of victuals across her back, a heavy cardboard box crammed with cans of beer clutched to her breast.

To cope with the desperate addiction to alcohol—and Tom Killeen, a missionary priest in Godthaab, reckoned more than a third of the Greenlanders are permanently under its influence—the communities have tried to ration the supply. The shops are open for only two hours each afternoon, and the bars for only two hours each evening. So there will be a points system.

But the Greenlanders have adapted. "Give me three!" is the common cry the counter five minutes before closing. It means three cases of beer: seven two half-liter cans. And to see the tables in the bars five minutes before closing, swimming with stubby green bottles, newly bought to last the rest of the night, is a sight that could or possibly delight the shareholders, there were any, of the giant brewer back in Denmark.

An additional curse that Europe has brought to Greenland is venereal disease—an affliction that, in a society sexually hospitable as the Eskimo has traditionally been, has spread like wildfire. It was depressing to discover this spring that a new strain of the disease has been discovered; Saigó Rose, it used to be called, and it spread from Vietnam, via the deserters of Sweden, across to Denmark and up the fjords of Greenland. For a country that has never known war—only one man, a Dane, was killed there in the last great conflict—the arrival of the most miserable legacy of America's involvement in that distant Asian war seems unjust, to say the very least.

TO THE ROMANTICS among us it is depressing that Greenland beset with the social problems a man has left as his calling card, must now face the realities of paying its way in a world many of its people are still reluctant to join. How the country will pay is a matter of conjecture. Its mineral wealth is said to be vast, but exploration has been disappointing—in oil, in uranium, in more obscure metals like molybdenum. One New Zealander I know has set up a shop to sell samples of a Godthaab granite that he has proved is the oldest rock to be found on the surface of the earth, but it is a measure of the desperation of the Greenland administration that his project, though tiny, is about the only success story that any

can point out in his part of the end.

The possibility for solvency now canvassed is that Greenland might urge the American government rent the bases it maintains in the area the two SAC bases at Sondre Stromd and Thule, the DEW-line stations Holsteinsborg and Angmagssalik up on the inland ice, the runways Kulusuk and Station Nord. The tapon is growing increasingly coned about the strategic shifts in the th Atlantic: Svalbard, for example, now easily accessible for both the et navy and the air force, thanks to sions taken by the Norwegians. The e Washington might, in theory, pay continued access to the Greenland es is high indeed, only, sadly for enland, the right to negotiate such eal is still vested in Copenhagen. onal ties are strong where they eter.

ut in truth it saddens me even to e to think about such grim reali- Greenland, I like to think, can be adrift from the crueler concerns Western man. It should be retained ond the pale of the stark world we e created, and encouraged to wrestle its smaller but no less profound ries, like whether enough seal can caught before winter, or how deep the sled runners from cracking he glacier pressure ridges.

began this account by telling of first journey to Greenland, and it been sustained by tales stemming a my third and most recent. But as my second trip there that conated my affection. My base then— as June, 1973—was Jakobshavn, town where Knud Rasmussen was n, and which celebrated the cen- ry of that event this past summer. ersuaded a dogsled driver to take twenty miles out into the inland for the sole purpose of discovering again what the Arctic peace was y like.

he sled ran fast and true, the twelve e dogs pulling madly in a fan be- us. We made our twenty miles in our; I pitched my tiny blue tent he middle of an immense sea of ost featureless whiteness. For two less days and nights I sat and ed and slept and listened to the drous symphony of the high Arctic. lver-coated fox came up, sniffed, padded away. Birds wheeled over-

head for their inspections; a solitary hare loped past. But otherwise it was just the sighing of the wind, the tiny flurries of windblown spume, the crack- ing of the ice when the shadows turned across the rocks, the slow peeling up, and back, of a patch of yellow lichen. I have never known such tranquility, and may never know it again. No finer therapy for the harrowed mind can be imagined, and yet for a Greenland hunter, the man whom the Danes took, uprooted, and placed in a few barbaric cities of their own mistaken creation, what I think of as therapy once was a normal part of his day-to-day existence, the very reason he is the kind of man he is.

After two days of this, a speck appeared on the horizon. It grew and grew. I heard the cheery shouts of the sled driver. "*Ille, ille!*" He had brought friends with him—a couple of boys from the village who wanted to see how I had managed. The dogs swept to a halt and played wild games with each other in the snow. We struck my tent, then sat around on the back of the sled, chewing *matak*, the whaleskin that is the Eskimo equivalent of chewing gum. After an hour we gathered

the dogs, turned about, and headed for home.

Jakobshavn was in great excitement. Some lads had caught a whale and were busy flensing it on the ice-strewn beach. That year's 300-foot iceberg—one always runs aground at the edge of the sandbar in the fjord in winter—had begun to melt and move, and was being slowly dragged by the tides out into the waters of Disko Bay. A red trading boat was coming into the dock with some school children aboard, back from Denmark with their heads filled with the frivolity of European city life.

Those waiting for the boat slipped away home once they saw it draw in. They knew their sons and brothers were aboard, that their days of waiting were now over. But in the customary Eskimo manner of squeezing the exquisite moment from every experience, no matter how mundane, they had decided to delay the pleasure of reunion for a few moments more—to wait a few minutes before relinquishing their hold on their passions, before rushing to greet, to hug and hold and be pleased with comradeship again. □

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 1979



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What's going

Andy Warhol, SELF-PORTRAIT, 1978
Collection the artist



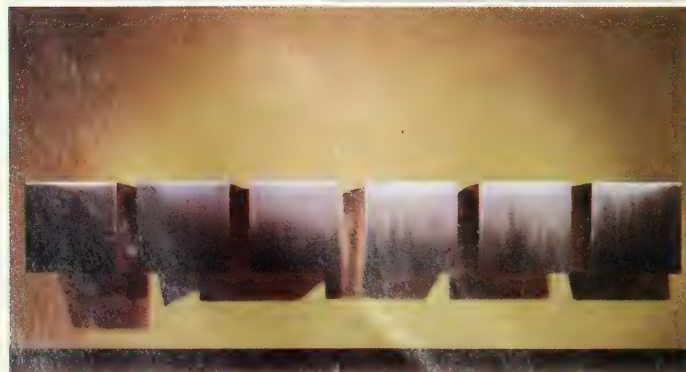
Jim Dine, (STILL LIVES), PAINTING ON MANHATTAN ISLAND, 1978. Collection Deutsche Bank, Neufahrn



Frank Stella, MORRO DA VIUVA II, 1975
Private collection



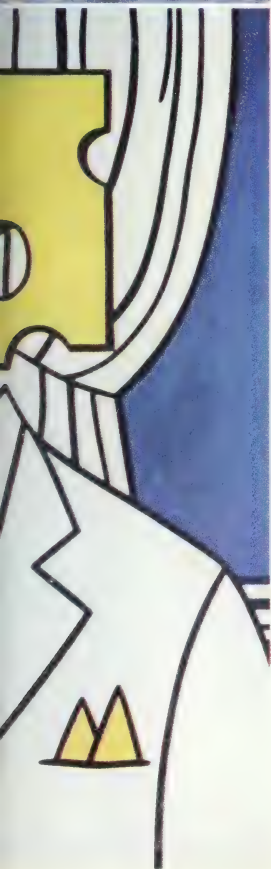
Robert Morns, WHEELS, 1963
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto
Gift from the
Volunteer Committee Fund, 1977



Donald Judd, UNTITLED, 1966-1968. Layton Art Collection, Milwaukee Art Center

Roy Lichtenstein, PORTRAIT, 1977. Price c

ing on here?



You're looking at some pictures and constructions of contemporary American artists whose work once baffled, infuriated and delighted us, depending on your point of view. They challenged us then to see the things we'd always seen but never seen. And they succeeded.

Once these artists and their works were separately sealed in boxes labeled "pop" and "minimal." Now we can see them as part of the whole, of the single thread of our lives and times—in a stunning new exhibition organized by the Milwaukee Art Center titled "Emergence and Progression: Six Contemporary American Artists," the first that brings together their disparate responses to their common challenge.

They teach us, each artist in his own way, that beneath the simple lies the complex, and that we can only discover what is really going on by looking at it long enough.

That's one reason we sponsored this exhibition and why we hope you can see it at the times and places listed below. In our business as in yours, we need to be reminded that in the search for fresh insights, the simplest and most familiar things can be as productive as the exotic and esoteric. Sponsorship of art that reminds us of this—and of our need for individual imagination, individual creativeness and individual innovativeness—is not patronage. It's a business and human necessity.

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THE MAKE-WORK ECONOMY

Escaping the toils of welfare dependency

by George Gilder

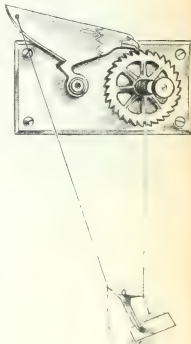
AS THE AMERICAN ECONOMY enters a recession, there is always a boom in the business of saving or creating jobs. Unlike most enterprises, this business tends to be run by politicians, and thrives not on savings and investment but on taxation and talk. John Connally, the Presidential aspirant, for example, would protect the jobs of U.S. workers by reducing foreign trade and competition: "Let the Japanese sit in their docks in their Datsuns and watch their color TV sets themselves." The Carter Administration wants to create jobs by expanding the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), which is already spending \$12 billion annually, into a national program of guaranteed employment for all.

Politicians on all sides seek to save jobs by subsidizing Chrysler, and Connally would establish a federal come-and-get-it fund for all large and failing companies. Even such staunch conservative voices as *National Review* and columnist Patrick Buchanan, a former Nixon speechwriter, have demanded government action on behalf of the afflicted automobile firm. Buchanan wrote: "This is a time for Republicans to rise above principle [and] leave Ralph Nader to mouth the moth-eaten clichés of Republican conventions of generations ago." Buchanan even went so far as to quote the dubious findings of the Congressional Budget Office, which predicts "the permanent loss of a quarter of a million jobs" if Chrysler

melts down. "Those who preach economic principles to working people in unemployment lines," he huffed, in the spirit of George Meany, "generally receive the reception they deserve."

The country is moving toward a system like Great Britain's, in which business is flogged by government officials and regulators, until it proves itself innocent—and perhaps worthy of subsidies—by reason of failure and incompetence. Companies that can show only a modest level of ineptitude are compensated by exemption from the antitrust laws; and a catastrophic series of blunders, like Chrysler's, already resulting in layoffs and cutbacks of employment, may win for the company an award from Washington as a precious source of jobs.

America's governing class of officials and politicians, unlike the ancestors from whom many inherited wealth, are capable of little productivity, and seem deeply suspicious of anyone who can find work for himself without pull or pelf. Edward Kennedy, Jerry Brown, and Jimmy Carter, holders of tax-paid employment, sometimes seem to recoil in horror at the very idea of an unsubsidized job. Private-sector work, in general, is seen as bad for health and family: Farmworkers are woefully exploited; industrial workers are poisoned; secretaries are sent for coffee and Danish; assembly-line workers are made to perform repetitive tasks; telephone operators are denied the opportunity to climb poles. Technicians in



George Gilder is currently writing a book entitled *Wealth and Poverty*, which Basic Books will publish next year and from which the material for this essay is substantially drawn.

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high-technology companies destroy the jobs of others. Workers in energy companies cause cancer and traffic jams. The eminent politicians feed on a considerable literature—produced in offices where there are leather couches, WATS lines, and expansive views of the East River—that defines most work outside of government as either predatory or degrading. A cottage industry has emerged, trafficking in reports, studies, conferences, seminars, lectures, brochures, videotapes, monographs, colloquia, documentary films, symposia, and photographic essays. The conclusions, as reported by the media, grimly denounce productive labor and predict the end of the world.

In fact, the employment generally acceptable in scholarly circles is that which does not produce anything—subsidized jobs. The identifying mark of these functions, apart from being well paid, is that they allow the jobholder to pretend he isn't in it for the money. As David O. Wilson of the *Boston Globe* writes:

Never mind that manufacturers of bologna, unleaded gasoline, and screwdrivers, grain farmers and real estate salespeople actually do more for their fellow human beings than any number of bureaucrats and teachers of sociology. . . . The new class members, their status fixed and enriched by tax exemptions, their tenures and civil service protections firmly enmeshed, manage still to perpetuate the fiction that they are somehow more devoted to the public interest than the drivers of 18-wheel tractor trailers.

Yet there is a sense in which people not in it for the money—people whose work does not yield a profit—do not have jobs at all. A more common term for what people do when they are spending money earned by others is *consumption*, and the usual word for what people do when they are not in it for the pay is *leisure*. Turning the consumption and leisure of subsidized or “created” jobs into activity lauded as idealistic and sacrificial public service—while at the same time disparaging the activities of the private sector as a grubby rat race—takes ingenuity and resourcefulness.

Some jobs are worth supporting. But all of them subsist on the productive labor of others. The proliferation of sinecures depends entirely on the enlargement of profits. The governing class, however, will do anything to conceal such realities. Its members wish to foster the illusion that entrepreneurship and labor are sustained by government. Every year uncountable millions of small-business jobs are destroyed indirectly by inflation, taxes, and misbegotten regulation, all blithely supported by large Congressional majorities. But let some

big firm stagger, or complain of unfair foreign competition, and the bravest of Senators start talking about “saving” American jobs. Let recession deepen, and the most dogged conservative begins to propose new government programs to create work.

These reactions are fully understandable. Who can oppose CETA job programs if they do anything at all to prevent the costly increases in dependency, crime, and family breakdown that are inevitable with unemployment? Who could object to government support for a firm like Chrysler when the alternative might be its purchase by foreign companies, themselves partly owned or heavily subsidized by government? Who can resist loan guarantees that obviate outlays of welfare and unemployment compensation estimated at \$1 billion in the Chrysler case? Because the cost of letting a large firm fail are essentially measurable and obvious, while the costs of saving it are initially small—because federal job creation programs always seem preferable to the tortures of joblessness—in every instance an analysis of evident costs and benefits will tend to favor action by government, whether for CETA or for Chrysler. But as productivity in U.S. industry declines, there arises the danger that all this job creation and development will result in an uncreative and undeveloping economy.

Featherbedding in Massachusetts

HAVING SPENT much of my life in New York and Massachusetts, I know these two states best. New York has already received much-deserved attention for its bureaucratic and financial excesses. But for the creation of meaningless work—from the social-science faculties in universities around Boston to the federally funded modern dancers of the Berkshires—Massachusetts is entirely without peer. Through the late 1970s, the Commonwealth led the nation in government job creation, and no less than 51 percent of the state's net job growth came from CETA. Here the federal government appeared to be creating jobs, and the state government fully collaborated. During the ten years after 1967, the Commonwealth's budget grew from \$700 million to \$4.3 billion, nearly tripling in real terms, while the population rose 5 percent.

Contrary to the widespread impression of a “Sunbelt” bias in the distribution of federal money, federal aid for the region rose steadily during this period. After several years of postponing by northeastern officials, the General

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Accounting Office in 1977 finally made an analysis that confirmed the findings of Warren Brookes of the *Boston Herald* that the Northeast got back \$1.06 for every tax dollar it sent to the federal government. Massachusetts—as might have been expected from the standing of its Representatives in Washington—received \$1.08.

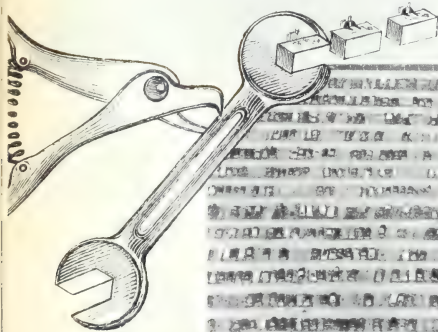
Throughout this decade of enlarging government in the region, Massachusetts remained one of the wealthiest states in the nation per capita, heavily middle class, highly educated, only 3 percent black, relatively exempt from the huge migrations from the South that allegedly account for the high welfare and CETA activities in other states. (In fact, the example of Massachusetts should permanently put to rest any notion that the nation's burdens of welfare and job creation have much to do with the special problems of race.) Moreover, as the home of the country's most prestigious private universities and as a center of advanced technology, the state seemed well situated to thrive even without this massive infusion of money from other parts of the land.

Yet Massachusetts did not thrive. Including all the government jobs, employment growth in the state has been less than half as rapid as in the rest of the country, only 60 percent as fast as the rest of New England, and throughout the late 1970s only 25 percent as fast as

neighboring New Hampshire.* The prospects for the future are worse, at least for private employment. According to the First National Bank of Boston, the state suffered an actual decline in capital investment in the late 1970s. Although there has recently been a revival, led by the computer firms along Route 128, the general anti-business posture of the state tax system remains intact under Gov. Edward King. According to a 1977 study by *Fortune*, the Commonwealth ranked dead last among the fifty states in its ability to attract new plants to locate within its borders.

Massachusetts ended the decade, however, ranked No. 1 in the country in welfare payments, welfare growth, welfare percentage of the state budget, welfare percentage of the state population, and CETA jobs per capita, and ranked high in both unemployment and unemployment compensation, with youth joblessness at close to 30 percent. Lest anyone worry, however, about these hapless souls without work, the average family income of the long-

*Those states with the smallest return flow of federal tax dollars, such as Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, and Iowa, have all performed far better than New York or Massachusetts. Illinois, with a liberal tradition near the equal of New York's, and with a proportion of blacks 25 percent greater than New York and five times greater than Massachusetts, received back just seventy cents per tax dollar for the entire decade.



George Gardner

unemployed (fifteen weeks or longer) \$15,311 (not counting benefits). The state ranked high in the nation in unanswered advertisements for workers: companies all over had manufacturing jobs, at 40 to 70 percent above the minimum wage, with the Department of Employment Security, only to be repeatedly informed that "there is no one suitable for your type of employment."

Government job creation and salvation has been proceeding for a decade in Massachusetts and other states: not only CETA programs and statewide subsidies for public-sector jobs but also state-level counterparts of the Chrysler approach. Sustaining the illusion that big companies are a prime source of new jobs, state officials often engage in an unseemly and defeating competition of blandishments to big business, giving them subsidies and tax exemptions, and even issuing bonds to construct their plants. Yet all the money to finance make-work, and all the subsidies and exemptions for large firms, finally must be raised by increasing the tax burden on smaller businesses—on the source of new employment for the future. Job subsidies thus can end up depriving jobs. The paradox of job creation is that any job requiring a subsidy may diminish total employment by eroding the capital that is needed to create and sustain productive work.

The market in self-fulfillment

JOB CREATION is performed chiefly by individuals. Their supplies of work and human capital can engender their own demand. In Massachusetts, there emerged a generation of youth jaded by Vietnam and by a rural scorn of business much like the upper-class English disdain for "trade." These attitudes fused in a demand for "meaningful jobs" contaminated by capitalism and devoted to working with people. It was not a slack or silt generation; there was fire in its eye and enterprise in its secret heart. But, disdaining business, there were few places for its energies to go but to the government.

And did they ever create jobs. It was a display of enterprise and resourcefulness reminiscent of the great epochs of business growth. It was not easy, for example, in a time of declining school-age population, to secure a 60 percent gain in educational spending—but it did, mostly in a bloated bureaucracy. There were important contributions, though, was to transform the very concept and structure of government service. In a synthesis of the various elements of social work, Massachusetts

created a chaotic universe of social healers and provocateurs. State mental-health services devolved to the communities, where they were transformed into bureaucracies of cultural arcana: "crime prevention" programs, special education, halfway houses, environmental outreach groups, encounter training, consumers' advocacy, and clearinghouses for alternative energy, nuclear protest, and solar worship. Urban revitalization would be accomplished by yoga, T-groups, instruction in community action and agitation for equal rights, family planning, sex education, abortion counseling, and child developing. Satellite agencies were established to cope with rape crises, battered wives, and food co-ops. And all these overlapping ministries were sheltered beneath the umbrella of a state social-service conglomerate led by higher-ranking activists pursuing equally amorphous duties. Lawyers were everywhere on hand, filing briefs and mustering class action. Neither the governor nor the legislature considered it politic—or even sane—to interfere. Among the primary beneficiaries of the general disarray were the public-service unions, which managed to negotiate contracts and pension plans as generous as New York City's.

The jobs that were created with such ingenuity and abandon, cajolery and lobbying, protest and pettifoggery, legal acumen and bureaucratic invention—all sufficient to launch a thousand businesses—turned out not to be jobs at all but seats at the trough, where the workers consumed their own human capital and the income of the state with every righteous assurance, at least some of the time, that they were serving the cause of social change and progress.

THE PRECIOUS RESOURCE of government was squandered woefully during this period. Like New York City, Massachusetts in the 1970s was a microcosm of Washington, which spread its riches into thousands of consultancies, commissions, and contract units, and created great satellite bureaucracies. In Washington, the impulse was toward job creation and enterprise. The purpose, most of the time, was to create employment, much as the government is attempting to save jobs at Chrysler today. The impulse is generous. But, alas, as every rich man knows, and the richest government in the world should learn, generosity is fraught with pitfalls. One trouble with government as "the employer of last resort" is that most government jobs, because of their special nature—which Vice-Presidential candidate Robert Dole characterized, in his pursuit of a prominent sinecure,

"Who could object to government support for a firm like Chrysler when the alternative might be its purchase by foreign companies?"

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"indoor work with no heavy lifting"—are easily becoming a first resort for all who wish to avoid the stresses of productive labor. Guaranteeing work turns out to be even more complicated—and more expensive—than guaranteeing incomes. It may indeed be impossible.

Work is what people will pay others to do because they find it unpleasant or difficult to do themselves. Because work is initially unappealing, it is done chiefly under the spur of psychological or material necessity. The test of real work is usually the market: Is the job worth such difficulty, unpleasantness, or impotence that people will pay to have it done? Is the product sufficiently desirable or rare to command a profitable price as shown by the willingness of others to exchange their own work for it? These constraints, which are palpable in the very texture of the job, are what distinguish work from play or from make-work.

Most CETA jobs are not work, even though they are sometimes unpleasant. At present, one feature of the bill provides so-called work experience for some 300,000 impoverished youths. But the youths themselves can sense the emptiness of it. The ones interviewed by the National Foundation, Inc. (VFI), called their time in the Neighborhood Youth Corps "shuffle" and a "farce." "Mostly the kids just go to the park or the beach and mess around with their money," one job counselor said. "They get the idea that's a job."

In any event, the bulk of CETA jobs in the early 1970s were not to poor youths but to the middle class, who also wished to avoid work, in the name of self-expression, without the excuse of a prevailing welfare culture in their communities. In 1978, \$8 billion of the money went to pay the salaries of white-collar and blue-collar municipal workers. In some cities, like Detroit and New York, many of these jobs were legitimate. The existence of the program allowed certain big-city mayors to avoid facing the difficult choices entailed by their exorbitant settlements and pension agreements with public-service unions.

Increasingly, however, as the CETA program matured, the ersatz poor began to twist it to their own ends. CETA money began to crop up in the most peculiar places, financing the efforts of radical filmmakers in Chicago, artists' collectives in Cambridge, and a modern-dance troupe in the Berkshires. Frazzled community organizers clambered aboard, along with gay-rights activists, compilers of luridly dubious data, and protest-mobilizers against nuclear plants, all vaguely super-

counselors and job developers with heads full of regulations and figures.

What such jobs accomplish for many of their holders much of the time is to delay discovery of what a job is. Hundreds of thousands of Americans waste away the irretrievable years of their youths imagining that the world will long pay them to express themselves in a creative way, that a job is an excursion, in which you make movies or dance or agitate, or write empty letters for members of Congress. These youths are only partly to blame for their plight. Like welfare recipients, they often work hard and sacrifice much (more than they know) to acquire their sinecures. Far more at fault is the political order that fosters this self-destructive and socially erosive behavior—the adults who create these insidious systems of dependency and self-indulgence.

Job development or creation, it so happens, is something government only rarely does well. Distributing money it can do with great efficiency. But when the public grows resentful of welfare, Washington continues it in the guise of distributing work, which is more acceptable to the public, as well as more appealing to potential recipients. Thus the welfare state expands by offering more attractive packaging for its products. Beneath the surface it is the same old trap of dependency and demoralization, be it for the individual or the corporation.

Capitalizing on failure

JOB "guarantee" and "creation" programs deny the understanding that all jobs are to some extent created by the worker. Whether a bricklayer or a magazine editor, a janitor or an actress, a corporate executive or an assembly-line worker, only the jobholder can finally guarantee the job, by the act of supplying labor, undergoing hardship, achieving distinction, engendering profit, however small, thus becoming part of the struggle by which human life improves itself. In this effort, obstacles, such as discrimination, early rejection, or even bankruptcy, often elicit higher achievement, impelling the worker to find or invent for himself a new task, or a new company. When Boeing teetered near collapse in the early 1970s and laid off thousands of workers, few observers saw that event as a boon for Seattle. Yet laid-off Boeing workers and technicians started scores of small businesses—from electronics firms and solar panel factories to an importer of specialty coffees for the entire West Coast.

Since World War II, the groups that have

"The paradox of job creation is that any job that requires a subsidy may diminish total employment. . . ."

George Gilder
THE
MAKE-WORK
ECONOMY

made the largest gains in American society are not the once-lordly white Anglo-Saxon Protestants, presumably free from discrimination and relatively beyond hardship. WASPs have been passed in per capita income by seven ethnic minorities, including the Jews, long victims of bias, the Japanese, interned in concentration camps in California during the war, and recent generations of blacks of West Indian heritage, who suffered all the presumed liabilities of discrimination in a white-dominated society. The groups that have done worst, like once-wealthy WASP families, have often been those who have had it easiest or those who were seduced by government into the dependency of the welfare culture.

Some of the greatest successes started with the least. For example, ten years ago a Lebanese family arrived in Lee, Massachusetts, with a few dollars and fewer words of English. The family invested the dollars in renting an abandoned shop beside the road on the edge of town, and started selling vegetables, rising at five every morning to drive slowly a ramshackle truck a hundred miles to farms in the Connecticut Valley, where they purchased the best goods they could find as cheaply as possible to sell that morning in Lee. It was a classic entrepreneurial performance—arbitrage, identifying price differentials in different markets, and exploiting them by labor. But because both the labor and the insight was little compensated, it was in a sense invisibly saved and invested in the store. All six children were sources of accumulating capital as they hustled about the place. The store remained open for long hours, cashed checks for locals, and began to build a clientele.

The secret was in the six children (who kept the family deep in the statistics of per capita poverty long after its arrival) and in the entrepreneurial vision of the owner, which eluded all the charts. Michael Zabian is the man's name, and he recently bought the biggest office building in the town, a three-story structure made of the same Lee marble as the Capitol. He owns a large men's clothing store at street level, and what amounts to a small shopping center at his original site; and he preens in three-piece suits in the publicity photos at the Chamber of Commerce.

As extraordinary as his decade of achievement may seem, though, two other Lebanese have performed similar marvels in the Berkshires and have opened competing shops in Lee. Other immigrants in areas of high nominal unemployment, Cubans in Miami, Portuguese in Providence and Newark, Koreans in Washington, Vietnamese in Los Angeles—to mention the more recent arrivals—have per-

formed comparable feats of commerce, with little help from banks or government or the profession of economics.

A central truth of American history, from the frontier to the crucible of immigration to congested seaport cities, is that hardship, affirmative action or government make-work fosters character and achievement and creates new jobs. As always, hierarchies narrow as they approach the top, and big winners are rare as geniuses. But despite the spiraling deductions of inflation and taxes, despite the mazes of regulation, despite burdens of government in many ways greater here than in any other capitalist country, opportunities in America are objectively as promising as ever. Not everyone can rise to chair a major corporation or write for the *New York Times*, but anyone who can overcome the prevailing spirit of gloom and escape the toils of welfare dependency can still hope to achieve a secure footing in the U.S. economy. It is the preoccupation with failure and decline, the obsession with poverty unrelieved by any comprehension of the sources of wealth—the increasing shortsighted reliance on the state to preserve and create jobs by consuming our capital—that threatens the future of our society.

Some of the most effective job-creating wealth in America is "unearned." About the same time Michael Zabian arrived on our shores, Peter Sprague, now his Berkshire neighbor, inherited \$400,000, largely from the sale of Sprague Electric Company, the family firm. Many heirs of similar legacies have managed to lose most of it in a decade or so. But Sprague set out on a risky course that could have lost him his money much faster. He decided to use his money to revitalize companies that faced bankruptcy and lacked funds.

In 1964, three years after successfully starting a chicken hatchery in Iran, Sprague moved in on a failing computer company called National Semiconductor, which had been negotiating for six months with an English firm. Sprague considered the situation for a week and then bought a controlling interest. He hired a computer genius named Charles Sporck to run the company, which is now a leader in the revolution in semiconductor technology and has been one of America's fastest growing firms.

In the mid-Sixties Sprague bought several other companies, including the now-glamorous Energy Resources, and he temporarily rescued Design Research from near bankruptcy (it folded this year). In the early 1970s he went into a partnership in public relations with Don Weedon Associates, ran, unsuccessfully, for Congress, and saved several more companies

cluding Advent, now a big-screen television m.

A sports car buff, in 1975 he indicated to me friends an interest in reviving Aston-Martin, which had gone out of business six months earlier. Arriving in England with a tentative plan to investigate the possibilities, he was besieged by reporters and television cameras. Headlines blared: MYSTERY YANKEE FINANCIER TO SAVE ASTON-MARTIN. Eventually he did, and the company now is securely profitable.

A governmental counterpart to Sprague's investment activity was Anthony Wedgwood Benn's National Enterprise Board in England, which spent \$8 billion in an effort to save various British companies by drowning them in money. Before Sprague arrived in England, Benn had adamantly refused to invest in Aston-Martin, dismissing the venerable firm as a hopeless case and subsidizing instead forty other companies, most of which, unlike Aston-Martin, still lose money, and some of which ended up bankrupt, despite all the ministrations of government. Benn also turned down opportunity to buy National Semiconductor for \$4 million, and authorized \$4.7 million in a scheme for a yet-undesigned luxury-car competitor for Aston-Martin. With his \$100,000 inheritance and his considerable skills, Sprague has revived more companies and created more

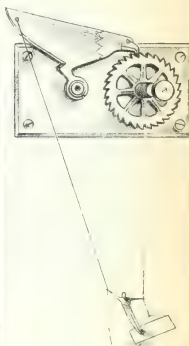
productive jobs than did Benn with the British Treasury.

An end to corporate welfare

A JOB GUARANTEE gives what cannot be given. It implies that everyone could diminish effort and slackly accept pay without causing the entire system to decay. In fact, as workers have demonstrated, in fields as diverse as air-traffic control and assembly-line labor, a resolve to follow precisely the book specifications of the job may bring a whole enterprise to a halt. Productivity studies indicate average variations of four-to-one in the efficiency of workers doing the same job for the same pay. If, under a regimen of guarantees like those that pertain to civil service, all workers merely performed at the minimal level, the U.S. standard of living would collapse. The essence of a job is the risk of being fired if the work is not performed. A guaranteed job implies that the work is mostly optional, and thus, like the average CETA slot, no real job at all.

The essence of productive work is that it is altruistic: it is done in response to the needs of others. Make-work, despite the claims of altruism by its advocates, is more often selfish. It is done to satisfy the worker rather than the

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market. The irony is that the holders of such jobs frequently resent their sinecures and shuffles of paperwork. Meanwhile, performers of hard productive labor can attain deep gratification from their jobs. By expanding the realm of subsidized work, the country undermines the morale of the entire work force.

The effect of subsidizing giant companies to save jobs is no better than creating or guaranteeing them through CETA. It is said that to save a firm like Chrysler is to rise above principle. That assertion is false. To save Chrysler is merely to establish a different principle: namely that major U.S. corporations, even if they serve no crucial public interest or national-security role, will not be allowed to fail.

That principle dictates an accelerating decline in American productivity and the surrender of U.S. leadership in the world economy. The possibility of failure is as important to capitalist enterprise as the opportunity to succeed. As the experience of the U.S. railroad industry, the Post Office Department, and the New York City public services all attest, access to the U.S. Treasury cripples management in negotiating with unions. The resulting contracts consistently exceed productivity gains and thus erode the assets of any company until, at last, it fails, and must seek the support of government. A federal fund to subsidize failing companies is a self-fulfilling prophecy of company failure.

Extensive experience in Europe, moreover, demonstrates that once a company becomes a ward of the state it only rarely again becomes reliably profitable. Of the fourteen largest state-owned manufacturers in Western Europe, all of which benefit from numerous special advantages from government, only one, DSM, a chemical firm in the Netherlands, has earned a consistent return—and a modest one at that. Even Renault, the most celebrated example of nationalized success, has been a burden on the taxpayer. Indeed, as the *Harvard Business Review* has pointed out, the French auto firm's private-sector rival, Peugeot-Citroën, has paid as much in taxes to the government (1.3 billion French francs over the past five years) as Renault has received in subsidies (1.7 billion). In Italy and Great Britain, nationalized firms, afflicted with voracious unions, have caused grave budgetary crises. The U.S. bail-out of Lockheed will be a disaster if it is used as a precedent for further government intervention. A policy of subsidizing failures like Chrysler will end in an economy strewn with capital-guzzling industries long past their time of profitability—old companies that cannot create new jobs themselves but can stand in the way of job creation.

It is small businesses, not firms like Chrysler, that generate most of the employment in America. During the past decade, business on *Fortune's* list of the 1,000 largest companies have experienced virtually no job growth at all and have undergone a 26 percent decline in the real value of their equity. Meanwhile, between 1969 and 1976 smaller firms created 7.4 million new jobs, nearly four times as many as the government. A recent study for the Commerce Department showed that "young high-technology companies" have been growing in employment at a rate of 40 percent annually, about thirteen times faster than "mature firms." In addition, small firms provide more than 80 percent of the jobs for young blacks and other "disadvantaged" citizens.

Recent years have seen a boom in entrepreneurship in America, with the number of new incorporations rising from 93,000 in 1950 to 436,000 in 1977, accounting for the vast majority of new jobs during that period. Even unincorporated businesses have experienced greater gains in asset value during this period than have the leviathans. Last year's cut in capital-gains taxes, engineered by the late Rep. William Steiger of Wisconsin, has prompted a new surge in venture capital. Its vital center is south of San Francisco in Santa Clara County, the locus of America's most rapidly growing and dynamically creative new industry—the application of microprocessors, the computer on a silicon chip. Here in "Silicon Valley"—already the home of hundreds of companies—more than a hundred new firms have emerged in the past year alone and the pace of new business formations is still accelerating. These companies, with their ever proliferating computer devices applicable throughout industry, represent a promethean technology, comparable to the steam engine and telephone of previous ages, that promise to launch at last the long-predicted computer age. On its heels are breakthroughs in microbiology, laser science, and other fields with only slightly smaller promise in creating jobs.

This is how job creation actually occurs in the United States. Bailing out big corporations and contriving government sinecures is the opposite of this process. For growth to occur there must be not "guarantees" for present employment patterns but tax cuts to aid the emerging industries of the future. The current configuration of jobs and industries, with its network of interest groups and political dependencies, is the shell through which must break the new firms that are the only reliable source of job growth. The attempt to cling to the obsolescent, in fear of the unknown, is the surest course of job destruction. □



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SEEING NATURE WHOLE

by John Fowles

A few years ago I stood in a historic place. It was not a great battlefield, a house, a square, the site of one famous event; but the site only of countless small ones—a neat little eighteenth-century garden, formally divided by gravel walks into parterres, with a small wooden house in one corner, where the garden's owner had once lived. There is only one other garden to compare with it in human history, and that is the one in the Book of Genesis, which never existed outside words. The one in which I stood is very real, and it lies in the old Swedish uni-

John Fowles lives in England and has written poetry, fiction, and literary essays. His most recent novel is Daniel Martin. This essay is excerpted from The Tree, by John Fowles, with photographs by Frank Horvat, which Little, Brown will publish next spring.

versity town of Uppsala. Its owner was the great warehouse clerk and indexer of nature, Carl von Linné, better known as Linnaeus, who between 1730 and 1760 docketed, or attempted to docket, most of animate being. Perhaps nothing is more moving at Uppsala than the actual smallness and ordered simplicity of that garden and the immense consequences that sprung from it in terms of the way we see and think about the external world. It is something more than another famous shrine for lovers of nature, like Selborne or Coate Farm or Walden Pond. In fact, for all its air of gentle peace, it is closer to a nuclear explosion, whose radiations and mutations inside the human brain were incalculable and continue to be so: the place where an intellectual seed landed, and is now grown to a tree that shadows the entire globe.

I am a heretic about Linnaeus, and find nothing less strange, or more poetically just, than that he should have gone mad at the end of his life. I do not dispute the value of the tool he gave to natural science—which was in itself no more than a shrewd extension of the Aristotelian system and which someone else would soon have elaborated, if he had not—but I have doubts about the lasting change it has effected in ordinary human consciousness.

Evolution has turned man into a sharply isolating creature, seeing the world not only anthropocentrically but singly, mirroring the way we like to think of our private selves. Almost all our art before the Impressionists—or their St. John the Baptist, William Turner—betrays our love of clearly defined boundaries, unique identities, of the individual thing released from the confusion of background. This power of detaching an object from its surroundings and making us concentrate on it is an implicit criterion in all our judgments on the more realistic side of visual art, and very similar, if not identical, to what we require of optical instruments like microscopes and telescopes—which is to magnify, to focus sharper, to distinguish better, to single out. A great deal of science is devoted to this same end: to providing specific labels, explaining specific mechanisms and ecologies—in short, to sorting and tidying what seem in the mass indistinguishable one from the other.

Even the simplest knowledge of the names and habits of flowers or trees starts this distinguishing or individuating process, and removes us a step from total reality toward anthropocentrism; that is, it acts mentally as an equivalent of the camera's viewfinder. Already it destroys or curtails certain possibilities of seeing, apprehending, and experiencing. And that is the bitter fruit from the tree of Uppsalan knowledge.

It also begs considerable questions as to the realities of the boundaries we impose on what we see. In a wood, the actual visual "frontier" of any one tree is usually impossible to distinguish, at least in summer. We feel, or think we feel, nearest to a tree's "essence" (or that of its species) when it chances to stand, like us, in isolation; but evolution did not intend trees to grow singly. Far more than ourselves they are social creatures, and no more natural as isolated specimens than man is as a marooned sailor or a hermit. Their society in turn creates or supports other societies of plants, insects, birds, mammals, microorganisms, all of which we may choose to isolate and section off, but which remain no less the ideal entity, or whole experience, of the wood—and indeed are still so seen by most of primitive mankind.

Scientists restrict the word *symbiotic* to those relationships between species that bring some detectable mutual benefit; but the true wood, the true place of any kind, is the sum of all its phenomena. They are all in some sense symbiotic, being together in a togetherness of beings. It is only because such a vast sum of interactions and coincidences in time and place is beyond science's calculation (a scientist might say beyond useful function, even if calculable) that we so habitually ignore it, and treat the flight of the bird and the branch it flies from, the leaf in the wind and its shadow on the ground, as separate events, or riddles. What bird? Which branch? What leaf? Which shadow? These question-boundaries (where do I file that?) are ours, not of reality. We are led to them, caged by them not only culturally and intellectually, but quite physically, by the restlessness of our eyes and their limited field and acuity of vision. Long before the glass lens and the movie camera were invented, they existed in our

eyes and minds, both in our mode of perception and in our mode of analyzing the perceived: endless short sequence and jump-cut, endless need to edit and arrange this raw material.

I The cost of understanding

I SPENT ALL my younger life as a more or less orthodox amateur naturalist; as a pseudoscientist, treating nature as some sort of intellectual puzzle, or game, in which being able to name names and explain behaviorisms—to identify and to understand machinery—constituted all the pleasures and the prizes. I became slowly aware of the inadequacy of this approach: that it insidiously cast nature as a kind of opponent, an opposite team to be outwitted and beaten; that in a number of very important ways it distracted from the total experience and the total meaning of nature—and not only of what I personally needed from nature, not only as I had long, if largely unconsciously, begun to feel it (which was neither scientifically nor sentimentally, but in a way for which I had, and still have, no word). I came to believe that this approach represented a major human alienation, affecting all of us, both personally and socially; moreover, that such alienation had much more ancient roots behind the historical accident of its present scientific, or pseudoscientific, form.

Naming things is always implicitly categorizing and therefore collecting them, attempting to own them; and because man is a highly acquisitive creature, brainwashed by most modern societies into believing that the act of acquisition is more enjoyable than the fact of having acquired, that getting beats having got, mere names and the objects they are tied to soon become stale. There is a constant need, or compulsion, to seek new objects and names—in the context of nature, new species and experiences. Everyday ones grow mute with familiarity, so known they become unknown; and not only in nonhuman nature. Only fools think our attitude to our fellow men is a thing distinct from our attitude to “lesser” life on this planet.

All this is an unhappy legacy of Victorian science, which was so characteristically obsessed with both the machine and exact taxonomy. Only the other day I came upon a letter in a forgotten drawer of the little museum of which I am curator. It was from a well-known Victorian fern expert and about some twenty or so specimens he had been sent from Dorset—all reducible, to a modern botanist, to three species. But this worthy gentleman felt obliged, in a welter of Latin polysyllables, to grant each specimen some new subspecific or varietal rank, as if they were unbaptized children and might all go to hell if they were not given individual names. It would be absurd to deny the Victorians their enormous achievements in saner scientific fields, and I am not engaging in some sort of Luddite fantasy, wishing the machine they invented had been different, or even not at all. But we are far better at seeing the immediate advantages of such gains in knowledge of the exterior world than at assessing the costs of them. The particular cost of understanding the mechanism of nature, of having so successfully itemized and pigeonholed it, lies most of all in the ordinary person's perception of it, in his ability to live with and care for it—and not to see it as enemy, challenge, defiance. Selection from total reality is no less necessary in science than it is in art; but outside those domains (in both of which the final test of selection is utility, or yield, to our own species) it seriously distorts and limits any worthwhile relationship.

I CAUSED MY HOSTS at Uppsala, where I went to lecture on the novel, some puzzlement by demanding (the literary business once over) to see Linnaeus's garden rather than the treasures of one of the most famous libraries in Europe. The feeling that I was not behaving as a decent writer should was familiar. Again and again in recent years I have told visiting literary academics that the key to my fiction, for what it is worth, lies in my relationship with nature—I might almost have said, for

reasons I will explain, in trees. And again and again I have seen, under varying degrees of politeness, this assertion treated as some sort of irrelevant quirk, eccentricity, devious evasion of what must be the real truth: literary influences and theories of fiction, and all the rest of that purely intellectual midden that faculty hens and cocks so like scratching over. Of course such matters are a part of the truth, but they are no more the whole truth than that the tree we see above ground is the whole tree. Even if we do discuss nature, I soon sense that we are talking about two different things: on their side some abstract intellectual concept, and on mine an experience whose deepest value lies in the fact that it cannot be directly described by any art . . . including that of words.

One interrogator even accused me of bad faith: that if I sincerely felt so deeply on the matter, I should write more about it. But what I gain most from nature is beyond words. To try to capture it verbally immediately places me in the same boat as the namers and would-be owners of nature—that is, it exiles me from what I most need to learn. It is a little as it is in atomic physics, where the very act of observation changes what is observed; though here the catch lies in trying to describe the observation. To enter upon such a description is like trying to capture the uncapturable. Its only purpose can be to flatter the vanity of the describer—a function painfully obvious in many of the more sentimental natural-history writers.

But I think the most harmful change brought about by Victorian science in our attitude toward nature lies in the demand that our relation with it must be purposive, industrious, always seeking greater knowledge. This dreadfully serious and puritanical approach (nowhere better exhibited in the nineteenth century than in the countless penny magazines aimed at young people) has had two very harmful effects. One is that it turned the vast majority of contemporary Western mankind away from what had become altogether too much like a duty, or a school lesson; the second is that the far saner eighteenth-century attitude, which viewed nature as a mirror for philosophers, as an evoker of emotion, as a pleasure, a poem, was forgotten. There are in-

tellectual reasons as well for this. Darwin made sentimental innocence, nature as mainly personal or aesthetic experience, vaguely wicked. Not only did he propose a mechanism seemingly as iron as the steam engine, but his very method of discovery, and its success in solving a great conundrum, offered an equally iron or one-sided model for the amateur naturalist himself, and made the older and more humanist approach seem childish. A "good" amateur naturalist today merely means one whose work is valued by the professional scientists in his field.

An additional element of alienation has come with motion pictures and television, which are selective in another way. They present natural reality not only through other eyes, but in a version of it in which the novelty or rarity of the subject plays a preponderant part in choice and treatment. Of course the nature film or program has an entertainment value; of course there are some social goods in the now-ubiquitous availability of copies of other people's images and opinions of actual things and events; but, as with the Linnaean system, there is a cost. Being taken by camera into the deepest African jungle, across the Arctic wastes, thirty fathoms deep in the sea, may seem a "miracle of modern technology"; but it will no more bring the viewer nearer the reality of nature, or to a proper human relationship with the actual nature around him, than merely reading novels is likely to teach the writing of them. The most one can say is that it may help; a much more common result is to be persuaded of the futility of even trying.

Increasingly, we live (and not only in terms of nature and novels) by the old tag, *Aut Caesar, aut nullus*—"If I can't be Caesar, I'll be no one." If I can't have the knowledge of a scientist, I'll know nothing. If I can't have superb close-ups and rare creatures in the nature around me, to hell with it. Perhaps any representation of nature is better, to those remote from it in their daily lives, than none. Yet a great deal of such representation seems to me to descend straight from the concept of the menagerie, another sadly alienating selection, or reduction, from reality. Poking umbrellas through iron bars did not cease with the transition from the zoo to the screen.

The myth of the green man

MUCH OF seventeenth- and eighteenth-century science and erudition is obsolete nonsense in modern scientific terms: in its personal interpolations, its diffuse reasoning, its misinterpreted evidence, its frequent blend of the humanities with science proper—its quotations from Horace and Virgil in the middle of a treatise on forestry. But one general, if unconscious, assumption lying behind almost all pre-Victorian science—that it is being presented by an entire human being, with all his complexities, to an audience of other entire human beings—has been much too soon dismissed as a mere historical phenomenon, at best exhibiting an engaging amateurishness, at worst sheer stupidity, from neither of which we have anything to learn. It is not, of course, the fault of modern scientists that most of their formal discourse is now of so abstruse a nature that only their fellow specialists can hope to understand it, that the discourse itself is increasingly mechanical, with words reduced to cogs and treated as poor substitutes for some more purely scientific formulation; nor is it directly their fault that their vision of empirical knowledge, the all-important value they put on proved or demonstrable fact, has seeped down to dominate the popular view of nature—and our education about it. Our fallacy lies in supposing that the limiting nature of scientific method corresponds to the nature of ordinary experience.

Ordinary experience, from waking second to second, is in fact highly synthetic (in the sense of combinative or constructive), and made of a complexity of strands, past memories and present perceptions, times and places, private and public history, hopelessly beyond science's powers to analyze. It is quintessentially "wild," one might say unphilosophical, irrational, uncontrollable, incalculable. In fact, it corresponds very closely—despite our endless efforts to "garden," to invent disciplining social and intellectual systems—to wild nature. Almost all the richness of our personal existence derives from this synthetic and eter-

nally present "confused" consciousness of both internal and external reality, and not least because we know it is beyond the analytical, or destructive, capacity of science.

Half by its principles, half by its inventions, science now largely dictates and forms our common, or public, perception of and attitudes toward external reality. One can speak of an attitude that is generally held by society; but society itself is an abstraction, a Linnaeus-like label we apply to a group of individuals seen in a certain context and for a certain purpose; and before the attitude can be generally held, it must pass through the filter of the individual consciousness, where this irreducible "wild" component lies—the one that may agree with science and society but can never be wholly plumbed or commanded by them. One of the oldest and most diffused bodies of myth and folklore has accreted around the idea of the man in the trees. In all his manifestations, as dryad, as stag-headed Herne, as outlaw, he possesses the characteristic of elusiveness, a power of "melting" into the trees, and I am certain the attraction of the myth is so profound and universal because it is constantly "played" inside every consciousness.

This notion of the green man—or green woman, as novelist and naturalist W. H. Hudson made her—seen as emblem of the close connection between the actuality of present consciousness (not least in its habitual flight into a mental greenwood) and what seems to me lost by science in man's attitude toward nature—that is, the "wild" side of his own, his inner feeling as opposed to the outer, fact-bound, conforming face imposed by fashion—helped me question my old pseudoscientist self. But it also misled me for a time. In the 1950s I grew interested in the Zen theories of "seeing" and of aesthetics: of learning to look beyond names at things-in-themselves. I stopped bothering to identify species new to me; I concentrated more and more on the familiar, daily nature around me, where I then lived. But living without names is impossible, if not downright idiocy, in a writer; and living without explanation or speculation as to causality, little better—for Western man, at least. I discovered, too, that there was less conflict than I had imagined between nature as external assembly of names and facts and nature as

internal feeling; that the two modes of seeing or knowing could in fact marry and take place almost simultaneously, and enrich each other.

Nature's ultrahumanity

ACHIEVING A RELATIONSHIP with nature is both a science and an art, beyond mere knowledge or mere feeling alone; and, I now think, beyond Oriental mysticism, transcendentalism, "meditation techniques," and the rest—or at least as we in the West have converted them to our use, which seems increasingly in a narcissistic way: to make ourselves feel more positive, more meaningful, more dynamic. I do not believe nature is to be reached that way either, by turning it into a therapy, a free clinic for admirers of their own sensitivity. The subtlest of our alienations from it, the most difficult to comprehend, is our eternal need to use it in some way, to derive some personal yield. We shall never fully understand nature (or ourselves), and certainly never respect it, until we dissociate the wild from the notion of usability—however innocent and harmless the use. For it is the general uselessness of so much of nature that lies at the root of our ancient hostility and indifference to it.

There is a kind of coldness—I would rather say a stillness, an empty space—at the heart of our forced coexistence with all the other species of the planet. The naturalist Richard Jefferies coined a word for it: the *ultrahumanity* of all this is not man . . . not with us or against us, but outside and beyond us, truly alien. It may sound paradoxical, but we shall not cease to be alienated—by our knowledge, by our greed, by our vanity—from nature until we grant it its unconscious alienation from us.

I am not one of those supreme optimists who think all the world's ills, and especially this growing rift between man and nature, can be cured by a return to a quasi-agricultural, ecologically "caring" society. It is not that I doubt it might theoretically be so cured; but the possibility of the return defeats my powers of imagination. The majority of Western man are now urban, and the whole world will soon follow suit. A significant tilt of balance in hu-

man history is expected by the end of the coming decade: more than half of all mankind will by then have moved inside towns and cities. Any hope of reversing that trend, short of some universal catastrophe, is as tiny and precarious as the monarch butterflies I watched, an autumn or two ago, migrating among the Fifth Avenue skyscrapers in central Manhattan. All chance of a close acquaintance with nature, be it through intellect and education, be it in the simplest way of all, by having it near at hand, recedes from the many, who already effectively live in a support system in outer space, a creation of science, and without means to escape it, culturally or economically.

But the problem is not, or only minimally, that nature itself is in imminent danger or that we shall lose touch with it simply because we have less access to it. A number of species, environments, unusual ecologies are in danger. There are major pollution problems. But even in our most densely populated countries the ordinary wild remains far from the brink of extinction. We may not exaggerate the future threats and dangers, but we do exaggerate the present and actual state of this global nation—underestimate the degree to which it is still surviving and accessible to those who want to experience it. It is far less nature itself that is yet in true danger than our attitude toward it. Already we behave as if we live in a world that holds only a remnant of what there actually is—in a world that may come, but remains a black hypothesis, not a present reality.

I BELIEVE the major cause of this more mental than physical rift lies less in the folly or one-sidedness of our societies and educational systems, or in the historical evolution of man into a predominantly urban and industrial creature, a thinking termite, than in the way we have, during these past 150 years, devalued the kind of experience or knowledge we loosely define as art, and especially in the way we have failed to grasp its deepest difference from science. No art is truly teachable in its essence. All the knowledge in the world of its

techniques can provide in itself no more than imitations or replicas of previous art. What is irreplaceable in any object of art is never, in the final analysis, its technique or craft, but the personality of the artist, the expression of his or her unique and individual feeling. All major advances in technique have come about to serve this need. Techniques in themselves are always reducible to sciences—that is, to learnability. Once Joyce has written, Picasso painted, Webern composed, it requires only a minimal gift, besides patience and practice, to copy their techniques exactly. Yet we all know why this kind of technique-copy, even when it is so painstakingly done—for instance, in painting—that it deceives museum and auction-house experts, is counted worthless beside the work of the original artist. It is not of him or her; it is not art, but imitation.

As it is with the true “making” arts, so it is with the other aspects of human life of which we say that full knowledge or experience also requires an art—some inwardly creative or purely personal factor beyond the power of external teaching to instill or science to predict. Attempts to impart recipes or set formulas as to practice and enjoyment are always two-edged, since the question is not so much whether they may or may not enrich the normal experience of that abstract thing, the normal man or woman, but the certainty that they must in some way damage that other essential component of the process, the contribution of the artist in this sense—the individual experienter, the “green man” hidden in the leaves of his unique and once-only being.

Telling people why, how, and when they ought to feel this or that—whether it be with regard to the enjoyment of nature, of food, of sex, or anything else—may, undoubtedly sometimes does, have a useful function in dispelling various kinds of socially harmful ignorance. But what this instruction cannot give is the deepest benefit of any art, be it of making or of knowing or of experiencing: which is self-expression and self-discovery. The last thing a sex manual can be is an *Ars amoris*—a science of coupling, perhaps, but never an art of love. Exactly the same is true of so many nature manuals. They may teach you how and what to look for, what to question in external nature, but never in your own nature.

In science greater knowledge is always and indisputably good; it is by no means so throughout all human existence. We know it from art proper, where achievement and great factual knowledge, or taste, or intelligence, are in no way essential companions; if they were, our best artists would also be our most learned academics. We can know it by reducing the matter to the absurd, and imagining that God, or some protean visitor from outer space, were at one fell swoop to grant us all of knowable knowledge. Such omniscience would be worse than the worst natural catastrophe for our species as a whole; it would extinguish its soul, lose it all pleasure and reason for living.

This is not the only area in which, like the rogue computer of science fiction, some socially or culturally consecrated proposition—which may be true or good in its social or cultural context—extends itself to the individual; but it is one of the most devitalizing. Most mature artists know that great general knowledge is more a hindrance than a help. It is only innately mechanical, salami-factory novelists who set such great store by research: in nine cases out of ten what natural knowledge and imagination cannot supply is in any case precisely what needs to be left out. The green man in all of us is well aware of this. In practice we spend far more time rejecting knowledge than trying to gain it, and wisely so. But it is in the nature of all society, let alone one deeply imbued with a scientific and technological ethos, to bombard us with ever more knowledge—and to consider any questioning or rejection of it unpatriotic and immoral.

Art and nature are siblings, branches of the one tree, and nowhere more than in the continuing inexplicability of many of their processes—and above all those of creation and of effect on their respective audiences. Our approach to art, as to nature, has become increasingly scientized (and dreadfully serious) during this past century. It sometimes seems now as if it is principally there not for itself but to provide material for labeling, classifying, analyzing—specimens for “setting,” as I used to set moths and butterflies. This is, of course, especially true of—and pernicious in—our schools and universities. I think the first sign that I might one day become a novelist (though

I did not then realize it) was the passionate detestation I developed at my own school for all those editions of examination books that began with a long introduction: an anatomy lesson that always reduced the original text to a corpse by the time one got to it, a lifeless demonstration of a preestablished proposition. It took me years to realize that even geniuses, the Shakespeares, the Racines, the Austens, have human faults.

O Random personal creativity

OBSCURITY, the opportunity a work of art gives for professional explainers to show their skills, has become almost an aesthetic virtue; at another extreme, the notion of art as vocation (that is, something to which one is genetically suited) is dismissed as non-scientific and egalitarian. It is not a gift beyond personal choice, but one that can be acquired, like knowledge of science, by rote, recipe, and hard work. Elsewhere we become so patterned and persuaded by the tone of the more serious reviewing of art in our magazines and newspapers that we no longer notice their overwhelmingly scientific tone, or the paradox of this knowing-naming technique being applied to a nonscientific object—one whose production the artist himself cannot fully explain, and one whose effect the vast majority of the nonreviewing audience do not attempt to explain.

The professional critic or academic would no doubt say this is mere ignorance, that both artists and audiences have been taught to understand themselves and the object that links them, to make the relationship articulate and fully conscious—defoliate the wicked green man, hunt him out of his trees. Of course there is a place for the scientific, or quasi-scientific, analysis of art, as there is (and far greater) for that of nature. But the danger, in both art and nature, is that all emphasis is placed on the created, not the creation.

All artifacts, all bits of scientific knowledge, have one thing in common: that is, they come to us from the past, they are relics of something already observed, deduced, formulated,

created, and as such qualify to go through the Linnaean, and every other, scientific mill. Yet we cannot say that the “green” or creating process does not happen or has no importance just because it is largely private and beyond lucid description and rational analysis. We might as well argue that the young wheat-plant is irrelevant because it can yield nothing to the miller and his stones. We know that in any sane reality the green blade is as much the ripe grain as the child is father to the man. Nor of course does the simile apply to art alone, since we are all in a way creating our future out of our present, our “published” outward behavior out of our inner green being. One main reason we may seldom feel this happening is that society does not want us to. Such random personal creativity is offensive to all machines.

I BEGAN this wander through the trees—we shall come to them literally, by the end—in search of that much looser use of the word *art* to describe a way of knowing and experiencing and enjoying outside the major modes of science and art proper, a way not concerned with scientific discovery and artifacts, a way that is internally rather than externally creative, that leaves very little public trace, and yet that, for those very reasons, is almost wholly concentrated in its own creative process. It is really only the qualified scientist or artist who can escape from the interiority and constant now-ness, the green chaos of this experience, by making some aspect of it exterior and so fixing it in past time, or known knowledge. Thereby they create new, essentially parasitical, orders and categories of phenomena that in turn require both a science and an art of experiencing.

But nature is unlike art in terms of its product—what we in general know it by. The difference is that it is not only created, an external object with a history, and so belonging to a past, but also creating in the present, as we experience it. As we watch, it is, so to speak, rewriting, reformulating, repainting, re-

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photographing itself. It refuses to stay fixed and fossilized in the past, as both the scientist and the artist feel it somehow ought to; and both will generally try to impose this fossilization on it. Verb tenses can be very misleading here: we stick adamantly in speech to the strict protocol of actual time. Of and in the present we speak in the present, of the past in the past. But our psychological tenses can be very different. Perhaps because I am a writer (and nothing is more fictitious than the past in which the first, intensely alive and present, draft of a novel goes down on the page), I long ago noticed this in my naturalist self: that is, a disproportionately backward element in any present experience of nature, a retreat or running-back to past knowledge and experience, whether it was the definite past of personal memory or the indefinite, the imperfect, of stored "ological" knowledge and proper scientific behavior. This seemed to me often to cast a mysterious veil of deadness, of having already happened, over the actual and present event or phenomenon.

I had a vivid example of it only a few years ago in France, long after I thought I had grown wise to this self-imposed brainwashing. I came on my first Military orchid, a species I had long wanted to encounter but hitherto had never seen outside a book. I fell on my knees before it in a way that all botanists will know. I identified, to be quite certain, with Professors Clapham, Tutin, and Warburg in hand (the standard British *Flora*), I measured, I photographed, I worked out where I was on the map, for future reference. I was excited, very happy, one always remembers one's "firsts" of the rarer species. Yet five minutes after my wife had finally (other women are not the only form of adultery) torn me away, I suffered a strange feeling. I realized I had not actually *seen* the three plants in the little colony we had found. Despite all the identifying, measuring, photographing, I had managed to set the experience in a kind of present past, a having-looked, even as I was temporarily and physically still looking. If I had had the courage, and my wife the patience, I would have asked her to turn and drive back, because I knew I had just fallen, in the stupidest possible way, into an ancient trap. It is not necessarily too little knowledge that causes ignorance; pos-

sessing too much, or wanting to gain too much, can produce the same result.

There is something in the nature of nature, in its presentness, its seeming transience, its creative ferment and hidden potential, that corresponds very closely with the wild, or green-man, part of our own psyches; and it is a something that disappears as soon as it is relegated to an automatic pastness, a status of merely classifiable *thing*, image taken *then*. "Thing" and "then" attract each other. If it is thing, it was then; if it was then, it is thing. We lack trust in the present, this moment, this actual seeing, because our culture tells us to trust only the reported back, the publicly framed, the edited, the thing set in the clearly artistic or the clearly scientific angle of perspective. One of the deepest lessons we have to learn is that nature, of its nature, resists this. It waits to be seen otherwise, in its individual presentness and from our individual presentness.

I come now near the heart of what seems to me to be the single greatest danger in the rich legacy left us by Linnaeus and the other founding fathers of all our sciences and scientific mores and methods—or more fairly, left us by our leaping evolutionary ingenuity in the invention of tools. All tools, from the simplest word to the most advanced space probe, are disturbers and rearrangers of primordial nature and reality—are, in the dictionary definition, "mechanical implements for working upon something." What they have done, and I suspect in direct proportion to our ever-increasing dependence on them, is to addict us to purpose, both to looking for purpose in everything external to us and to looking internally for purpose in everything we do—to seek explanation of the outside world by purpose, to justify our seeking by purpose. This addiction to finding a reason, a function, a quantifiable yield, has now infiltrated all aspects of our lives—and become effectively synonymous with pleasure. The modern version of hell is purposelessness.

Nature suffers particularly in this, and our indifference and hostility to it is closely connected with the fact that its only purpose appears to be being and surviving. We may think that this comprehends all animate existence, including our own, and so it must, finally; but we have long ceased to be content with so

abstract a motive. A scientist would rightly say that all form and behavior in nature is highly purposive, or strictly designed for the end of survival—specific or genetic, according to theory. But most of this functional purpose is hidden to the nonscientist, indecipherable; and the immense variety of nature appears to hide nothing, nothing but a green chaos at the core—which we brilliantly purposive apes can use and exploit as we please, with a free conscience.

A green chaos. Or a wood.



An otter dream

IN SOME MYSTERIOUS WAY woods have never seemed to me to be static things. In physical terms, I move through them; yet in metaphysical ones, they seem to move through me, just as, if I watch a film, I stay physically in one place and it is the images in the projector that shift, as do the words on the page and the scenes they evoke, when read. This inner or mental reversal of the actual movement, common to all traveling, comes close to what I like most in all narrative art, from the novel to the cinema: that is, the motion from a seen present to a hidden future. The reason that woods provide this experience so naturally and intensely lies, of course, in the purely physical character of any large congregation of trees; in the degree to which they hide what exists, at any given point, beyond the immediately visible surroundings. In this they are like series of rooms and galleries, houselike, doored, and screened, continuous yet separate; or paged and chaptered, like a fiction. Just as with fiction, there are in this sense good and bad tree congregations—some that tempt the visitor to turn the page, to explore further, others that do not. But even the most “unreadable” woods and forests are in fact subtler than any conceivable fiction, which can never represent the actual multiplicity of choice of paths in a wood, but only one particular path through it. Yet that multiplicity of choice, though it cannot be conveyed in the frozen medium of the printed text, is very characteristic of the actual writing, of the constant dilemma—pain or plea-

sure, according to circumstances—its actual practice represents, from the formation of the basic sentence to the larger matters of narrative line, character development, ending. Behind every path and every form of expression one does finally choose lie the ghosts of all those that one did not.

I do not plan my fiction any more than I normally plan woodland walks; I follow the path that seems most promising at any given point, not some itinerary decided before entry. I am quite sure this is not some kind of rationalization, or irrationalization, after the fact; that having discovered I write fiction in a disgracefully haphazard sort of way, I now hit on the passage through an unknown wood as an analogy. It was the peculiar nature of my adolescent explorings of England's Devon countryside (peculiar because I had not been brought up in a rural atmosphere, could not take the countryside for granted; indeed it came to me with something of the unreality, the not-quiteness of a fiction) that made me what I am—and in many other ways besides writing.

I see now that what I liked best about the green density, the unpeopled secrecy of the Devon countryside that the chances of history gave me, was its explorability. I thought at the time that I was learning to shoot and fish (also to trespass and poach, I am afraid), to botanize and bird-watch; but I was really addicting myself, and beyond curability, to the pleasures of discovery, and in particular of isolated discovery and experience. The lonelier the place, the better it pleased me: its silence, its aura, its peculiar conformation, its enclosedness. I had a dream of some endless combe, I suppose almost an animal dream, an otter dream, of endless hanging beechwoods and hazel coppices and leated meadows, houseless and manless. It was not quite without substance in those days; such “lost” valleys still existed, and in some of them the rest of the world did not. But of course they were finite, and at some point ended at a lane, a cottage or farmhouse, “civilization”; and discovery died.

The cost of all this is that I have never gained any taste for what lies beyond the experience of solitary discovery—in terms of true geographical exploration, for the proper exploitation of the discovery. I have dabbled in many branches of natural (and human) his-

tory, and have a sound knowledge of none; and the same goes for countless other things besides. I like a kind of wandering wood acquaintance, and no more; a dilettante's, not a virtuoso's; always the green chaos rather than the printed map. I have method in nothing, and powers of concentration, of patience in acquiring true specialized knowledge, that would disgrace a child. I can concentrate when I write, but purely because it is a sublimated form of discovery, isolated exploration, my endless combe in leaves of paper. I place all this entirely on the original adolescent experience, for I do not think I was born so, with a painfully low threshold of boredom before learning or knowledge that is not clearly assimilable to the experience of solitary discovery.

PERHAPS BECAUSE I was brought up without any orthodox faith, and remain without it, there was also, I suspect, some quasi-religious element in my feeling toward woods. Their mysterious atmospheres, their silences, the parallels—especially in beechwoods—with columned naves that Baudelaire seized on in his famous line about a temple of living pillars, all these must recall the manmade holy place. We know that the very first holy places in Neolithic times, long before Stonehenge (which is only a petrified copse), were artificial wooden groves made of felled, transported, and re-erected tree trunks; and that the roofs must have seemed to their makers less roofs than artificial leaf-canopies. Even the smallest woods have their secrets and secret places, their unmarked precincts, and I am certain all sacred buildings, from the greatest cathedral to the smallest chapel, and in all religions, derive from the natural aura of certain woodland or forest settings. In them we stand among older, larger, and infinitely other beings, more remote from us than the most bizarre other non-human forms of life: blind, immobile, speechless (or speaking only Baudelaire's *confuses paroles*), waiting . . . altogether very like the only form a universal god could conceivably

take. The Neolithic peoples—the slaves, as we are, of an industrial economy, of their own great new cultural “invention” of farming—were the first great deforesters of our landscapes, and perhaps it was guilt that made them return to the trees to find a model for their religious buildings—in which they were followed by the Bronze Age, the Greeks and Romans with their columns and porticoes, the Celtic Iron Age with its Druids and sacred oak groves.

There was certainly something erotic in them, as there is in all places that isolate and hide; but woods are in any case highly sensuous things. They may not carry more species than some other environments, but they are far richer and more dramatic in sensory impressions. Nowhere are the two great contemporary modes of reproducing reality, the word and the camera, more at a loss—less able to capture the sound (or soundlessness) and the scents, the temperatures and moods, the all-roundness, the different levels of being in the vertical ascent from ground to treetop, in the variety of different beings themselves and the subtlety of their interrelationships. In a way, woods are like the sea, sensorily far too various and immense for anything but surfaces or glimpses to be captured. They defeat viewfinder, drawing paper, canvas, they cannot be framed; and words are as futile, hopelessly too laborious and used to capture the reality.

It is not for nothing that the ancestors of the modern novel that began to appear in the early Middle Ages so frequently had the forest for setting and the quest for central theme. Every novel since literary time began, since the epic of Gilgamesh, is a form of quest, or adventure. Only two other environments can match the forest as setting for it—and even then, not very favorably. The horizontality of the sea hides too little. The only screen in outer space is space itself. They are also much remoter from our human scale, their vistas far less immediately and incessantly curtailed. Never mind that the actual forest is often a monotonous thing, the metaphorical forest is constant suspense, stage awaiting actors—heroes, maidens, dragons, mysterious castles at every step.

It may be useless as a literal setting in an age that has lost all belief in maidens, dragons, and magical castles, but I think we have only superficially abandoned the basic recipe (dan-

ger, eroticism, search) first discovered by those early medieval writers. We have simply transferred the tree setting to the now more familiar brick-and-concrete forest of town and city. I must confess that certain juxtapositions of tree and building, especially in city hearts, and perhaps most strikingly of all in New York City, have always rather touched me: the sight of those literal and symbolic leaf-walls standing side by side, half-hiding, half-revealing, can be strangely poetic, and not just in architectural terms. Older and less-planned quarters of cities and towns are profoundly woodlike, and especially in this matter of the mode of their passage through us, the way they unreel, disorient, open, close, surprise, please. The stupidest mistake of all the many stupid mistakes of twentieth-century architects has been to forget this ancient model in their more grandiose town-planning. Geometric, linear cities make geometric, linear people; wood cities make human beings.



A vast and hostile desert

THAT LAST ASSERTION would have seemed very near heresy to the medieval mind, and politically dangerous to those of the Renaissance and seventeenth-century Europe. The attraction of the forest setting to the early pioneers of fiction was in no way an attraction to the forest itself. It was clearly evil; but being evil it gave convenient excuse for the legitimate portrayal of all its real or supposed dangers to the traveler. The church might complain about the eagerness with which the educated public throughout Europe took to these tree-tales of adultery, magic, mystery, monsters, eternal danger, and eternal temptation; but it could hardly deny the general truth of a proposition it was itself increasingly determined to maintain: the inherent wickedness of godless nature, in outer reality as in man himself. Raymond Chandler and the other creators of our own century's private eyes have used exactly the same technique, substituting evil city for evil trees and then giving themselves a comprehensive license, behind the pretext of an incorruptible hero, to describe

all the vices, horrors, and seductions from the straight path whose gauntlet he has to run in order to earn the adjective. Sir Galahad and Philip Marlowe are blood brothers.

During nearly all of the past thousand years true human virtue (and virtuous beauty) has lain for European mankind in nature tamed, on its knees inside the *hortus conclusus*, or emblematic walled garden of civilization. So powerful was this concept that naturalistic artistic representation of wild landscape is entirely absent before the seventeenth century, and so rare then that one might almost say before the advent of the Romantic movement: while public concern for nature, positive steps to protect it, did not come until well into the nineteenth century, and even then only intermittently. Our own, the last of the millennium, is in fact the first to show some sort of general and international concern; and I do not think we should be too self-congratulatory about that. The future may well judge that we had both the scientific awareness and the political organization, the potential, to do much more than we have done.

Nor is it simply that in the medieval beginnings of our suspicious attitude toward nature so many artists employed the literal imagery of the Garden of Eden, of Paradise, of Virgin and docile unicorn in a bower. Even when wilderness and chaos—the two were virtually synonymous—had to be shown in such things as the backgrounds of hermit and hell pictures, they were as formally arranged, as parklike, as the closed garden itself: exactly as if the physical limits of the painting were metaphorical garden walls, and nothing inside could be presented as it really existed, behaved, and grew. Of course this high formality now seems to us one of the great charms of medieval art; and one cannot blame the earlier medieval artists for failing to put down what they in any case lacked the techniques to represent, even if they had possessed the wish and the clear vision.

But those techniques came, and it seems to me that nothing is more revealing than the inability of such artists as Pisanello and Dürer to compass the reality of the wild—for all their honesty in other things, such as human portraiture, to look nature entire in the face. Clearly two such sharp observers and superb draftsmen could technically have conveyed

it; yet some deep mental blindness, or complex, prevented them. Dürer's tuft of violets or his hare, Pisanello's lizards, stags, his hoo-poe, and his cheetah (surely the most beautiful single drawing ever done of that animal) may seem to us as "natural," as realistic, as a modern photograph. But in terms of art history they must also seem surreptitious, bearing a faint stigma of the pornographic, of a secret wickedness the more public artist had to deny; for as soon as such individual elements become no more than components in a wider scene, they must be gardenized, artificially posed and arranged, turned into mere emblems.

We all have our favorite pictures, or icons, and one of mine has long been a painting by Pisanello in the National Gallery in London, *The Vision of St. Eustace*; the saint-to-be sits on his horse in a forested wilderness—he is out hunting—arrested before his vision of a stag bearing Christ crucified between its antlers. Other animals, birds, and flowers crowd the background of the small picture. The artifice of the ensemble, above all when compared with Pisanello's own survived work-sketches of individual beast and bird in it, is almost total. The sketches and drawings are entirely and dazzlingly naturalistic; yet in the painting their subjects become as heraldic and symbolic, as unreally juxtaposed, as beasts in a tapestry. I know no picture that demonstrates more convincingly, and touchingly, this strange cultural blindness; and it is fitting that Pisanello should have chosen the patron saint of dogs (and formerly of hunting, before St. Hubert usurped that role) as the central figure, and distorter, of the nonhuman life around him. What is truly being hounded, harried, and crucified in this ambiguous little masterpiece is not Christ, but nature itself.

Even the great seventeenth-century landscapists, such as Ruysdael, do not really get close to natural reality, if one compares their portrayal of it with that of contemporary towns and other human artifacts; it was still mere background to be composed and gardenized in accordance with their own notion of the picturesque—far less treescapes, in a painter like Hobbema, than townscapes composed with trees instead of houses. Nature by then was not so much to be feared and anathematized as

slighted and mistrusted—to be improved, made tasteful. In many ways painters did not begin to see nature whole until the camera saw it for them—and already, in this context, had begun to supersede them.

ART HAS NO special obligation to be realistic and naturalistic, indeed any obligation at all except to say what the artist wants or chooses to say. Yet this long-lasting inability to convey the whole as truthfully as the isolated part—this failure to match the human eye (or the camera) in the ensemble, despite having equaled it in the detail at least four centuries (Pisanello died in 1455) before the camera's invention—is symptomatic of a long and damaging doubt in man.

There are very understandable practical reasons why, well into the sixteenth century, European man (at home as well as on his voyages of exploration) should regard untamed nature much as he regarded the sea—as a vast and essentially hostile desert, a kind of necessary evil. Commerce, personal profit, government, social stability, and many other things required that the then largely arboreal wasteland between towns and cities should be crossed; but there was no pleasure in it, beyond safe arrival at the other end—except perhaps that of hunting, but even that was the sport of a few, and done armed, in safe parties.

As in so much else, the Robin Hood myth, or that part of it that suggests life under the greenwood tree can be pleasant, runs profoundly counter to the general feeling and spirit of the Middle Ages; and even in the Robin Hood corpus, the happy greenwood side is much more an element of the Elizabethan and later ballads and accounts than of the earlier ones. It is probably no coincidence that the end of the first great wave of common-land enclosure and the rise of the Puritan ethos both took place in Elizabethan times. The first hints of a rebellious and irreligious swing from nature-fearing to nature-liking took place then. The pastoral settings and themes of some of Shakespeare's plays—the depiction of not totally unreward-

ing exiles from the safe garden of civilization in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, *The Tempest*, and others—are not examples of the foresight of genius, but skillful pandering to a growing vogue. Yet little of this is reflected in actual seventeenth-century ways of life—and least of all in their gardens, which remained in general quite as formal as medieval ones. Nature still remained a potential dissolver of decency, a notion the endless chain of new discoveries about the ways of more primitive man—the nearer nature, the nearer Caliban—did nothing to dispel. It remained essentially an immense green cloak for Satan: for the commission of crime and sin, for doubters of religious and public order, above all for impious doubters of man himself, as God's chosen steward and bailiff over the rest of creation.

We may think, now that the steward has so comprehensively reversed the old ratio of nature to civilization, that such superstitious hatreds and fears of the wild are dead—and especially their indispensable corollary, the idea of all virtue and beauty lying inside the confines of the *hortus conclusus*. But I see little sign of it, and certainly not in the way ordinary householders in Europe and America still run their own gardens, or in the considerable industry that supplies their needs in terms of pesticides and herbicides. The one place—and ominously close to us, both physically and psychologically—in which wild nature remains unwelcome and detested is the private garden; and this despite its growing popularity in terms of books and television screen, and all the endeavors of the conservationists.

I remember a strange event, in that suburban road in Essex where I was born. One of the elderly residents went slightly mad on the death of his wife: he drew his curtains and turned his back on the outside world. There was at first considerable sympathy for the poor man, until it was realized that the outside world included his own garden. No grass was cut, no beds weeded, no trees pruned; the place ran riot with dandelion, ragwort, nettles, fireweed, heaven knows what else. Such a flagrant invitation to the abominable fifth column deeply shocked my father and his neighbors; and all their sympathy promptly shifted to

this Quisling's immediate neighbors, now under constant paratroop invasion from the seeded composites and willow-herbs. I passed this derelict horror one cold winter day and to my joy saw one of Britain's rarest and most beautiful birds, a waxwing, happily feeding on a massive crop of berries on a tree there. But that was only a tiny poetic revenge.

M

Retreating into outer space

MOST OF US remain firmly medieval, self-distancing, and distanced from what we can neither own nor fully control, and from what we cannot see or understand. Just as the vast bulk of science fiction has decreed that anything that visits us from outer space must (in defiance of all probability) come with evil intent, so do we still assess most of nature, or at least where it comes close to us. Some deep refusal to accept the implications of Voltaire's famous sarcasm about the wickedness of animals in defending themselves when attacked still haunts the common unconscious: what is not clearly for mankind must be against it. We cannot swallow the sheer indifference, the ultrahumanity, of so much of nature. We may deplore the deforestation of the Amazon basin, the pollution of our seas and rivers, the extermination of the whale family, and countless other crimes committed against the wild by contemporary man. But like nature itself, most of these things take place outside our direct knowledge and experience, and we seem incapable of supposing that responsibility for them (or lack of responsibility) might begin much closer to home, and in our own species' frightened past quite as much as in its helpless present—above all in our eternal association of ignorance with fear. I do not know how else one accounts for the popularity of such recent and loathsome manifestations of a purely medieval mentality as the film *Jaws*—and all its unhappy spawn.

The threat to us in the coming millennium lies not in nature seen as rogue shark but in our growing emotional and intellectual detachment from it—and I do not think the remedy lies solely in the success or failure of the con-

servation movement. It lies as much in our being able to admit the debit side of scientific revolution, and especially the changes it has effected in our modes of perceiving and of experiencing the world as individuals.

Science is centrally, almost metaphysically, obsessed by general truths, by classifications that stop at the species, by functional laws whose worth is valued by their universality; by statistics, where a Bach or a da Vinci is no more than a quatum, a hole in a computer tape. The scientist has even to generalize himself, to subtract all personal feeling from the conduct of experiment and observation and from the enunciation of its results. He may study individuals, but only to help establish more widely applicable laws and facts. Science has little time for minor exceptions. But all nature, like all humanity, is made of minor exceptions, of entities that in some way, however scientifically disregarding, do not conform to the general rule. A belief in this kind of exception is as central to art as a belief in the utility of generalization is to science; indeed one might almost call art that branch of science that present science is prevented, by its own constricting tenets and philosophies (that old *hortus conclusus* again), from reaching.

I see little hope of any recognition of this until we accept three things about nature. One is that knowing it fully is an art as well as a science. The second is that the heart of this art lies in our own personal nature and its relationship to other nature—never in nature as a collection of “things” outside us. The last is that this kind of knowledge, or relationship, is not reproducible by any other means—by painting, by photography, by words, by science itself. They may encourage, foster, and help induce the art of the relationship; but they cannot reproduce it, any more than a painting can reproduce a symphony, or the reverse. In the end they can serve only as an inferior substitute, especially if we use them as some people use sexual relationships, merely to flatter and justify ourselves.

There is a deeper wickedness still in Voltaire's unregenerate animal. It won't be owned, or more precisely, it will not be disanimated, unsouled, by the manner in which we try to own it. When it is owned, it disappears. Perhaps nowhere is our human mania for possess-

ing, our delusion that what is owned cannot have a soul of its own, more harmful to us. This disanimation justified all the horrors of the African slave trade. If the black man is so stupid that he can be enslaved, he cannot have the soul of a white man, he must be mere animal. We have yet to cross the threshold of emancipating mere animals; but we should not forget what began the emancipation of the slaves in Britain and America. It was not science or scientific reason, but religious conscience and fellow-feeling.

Unlike white sharks, trees do not even possess the ability to defend themselves when attacked; what arms they sometimes have, like thorns, are static; and their size and immobility means they cannot hide. They are the most defenseless of creation in regard to man, universally placed by him below the level of animate feeling, and so the most prone to destruction. Their main evolutionary defense, as with many social animals, birds, and fishes, lies in their innumerability, that is, in their capacity to reproduce—in which, for trees, longevity plays a major part. Perhaps it is this passive, patient nature of their system of self-preservation that has allowed man, despite his ancient fears of what they may harbor in terms of other nature (and supernature), to forgive them in one aspect, to see something that is also protective, maternal, even womblike in their silent depths.

All through history trees have provided sanctuary and refuge for both the justly and the unjustly persecuted and hunted. In the wood I know best there is a dell, among beeches, at the foot of a chalk cliff. Not a person a month goes there now, since it is well away from any path. But three centuries ago it was crowded every Sunday, for it is where the Independents came, from miles around along the border of Devon and Dorset, to hold their forbidden services. There are freedoms in woods that our ancestors perhaps realized more fully than we do. I used this wood, and even this one particular dell, in *The French Lieutenant's Woman*, for scenes that it seemed to me, in a story of self-liberation, could have no other setting.

This is the main reason I see trees, the wood, as the best analogue of prose fiction. All novels are also, in some way, exercises in attaining

freedom—even when, at an extreme, they deny the possibility of its existence. Some such process of retreat from the normal world—however much the theme and surface is to be of the normal world—is inherent in any act of artistic creation, let alone that specific kind of writing that deals in imaginary situations and characters. And a part of that retreat must always be into a “wild,” or ordinarily repressed and socially hidden, self: into a place always a complexity beyond daily (or artistic) reality, never fully comprehensible, mappable, explicable, eternally more potential than realized, yet where no one will ever penetrate as far as we have. It is our passage, our mystery alone, however miserable the account that is brought out for the world to see or hear or read second-hand.

The artist's experience here is only a special—unusually prolonged and self-conscious—case of the universal individual one. The return to the green chaos, the deep forest and refuge of the unconscious, is a nightly phenomenon, and one that psychiatrists—and torturers—tell us is essential to the human mind. Without it, it disintegrates and goes mad. If I cherish trees beyond all personal (and perhaps rather peculiar) need and liking of them, it is because of this, their natural correspondence with the greener, more mysterious processes of mind—and because they also seem to me the best, most revealing messengers to us from all nature, the nearest its heart.

NO RELIGION is the only religion, no church the true church; and natural religion, rooted in love of nature, is no exception. But in all the long-cultivated and economically exploited lands of the world our woodlands are the last fragments of comparatively unadulterated nature, and so the most accessible outward correlatives and providers of the relationship, the feeling, the knowledge that we are in danger of losing: the last green churches and chapels outside the walled civilization and culture we have made with our tools. And this is so however far we may have fled, or evolved

away from knowledge of, attachment to, interest in the wild—or use of its imagery to describe our more hidden selves and mental quirks.

To see woods and forests merely scientifically, economically, topographically, or aesthetically—not to understand that their greatest utility lies not in the facts derivable from them, or in their timber and fruit, or their landscape charm, or their utility as subject matter for the artist—proves the gathering speed with which we are retreating into outer space from all other life on this planet.

Of course there are scientists who are aware of this profoundest and most dangerous of all our alienation, and warn us of it; or who see hope in a rational remedy, in more education and knowledge, in committee and legislation. I wish them well in all of that, but I am a pessimist; what science and “reason” caused, they cannot alone cure. As long as nature is seen as in some way outside us, frontiered and foreign, *separate*, it is lost both to us and in us. The two natures, private and public, human and nonhuman, cannot be divorced; any more than nature, or life itself, can ever be truly understood vicariously, solely through other people's eyes and knowledge. Neither art nor science, however great, however profound, can finally help.

I pray my pessimism is exaggerated, and that we shall recover from this folly resenting the fact that we are, for all practical purposes, caged on our planet, of pretending that our life on it is a temporary inconvenience in a place we have outgrown, a boardinghouse we shall soon be leaving, and for whose other inhabitants and whose contents we need have neither respect nor concern. Scientists speak of biological processes re-created in the laboratory as being done *in vitro*—in glass, not in nature. The evolution of human mentality has put us all *in vitro* now, behind the glass wall of our own ingenuity.

There is a spiritual corollary to the way we are currently deforesting and denaturing our planet. In the end what we must most defoliate and deprive is ourselves. We might as soon start collecting up the world's poetry, every line and every copy, to burn it in a final pyre—and think we should lead richer and happier lives thereafter. □



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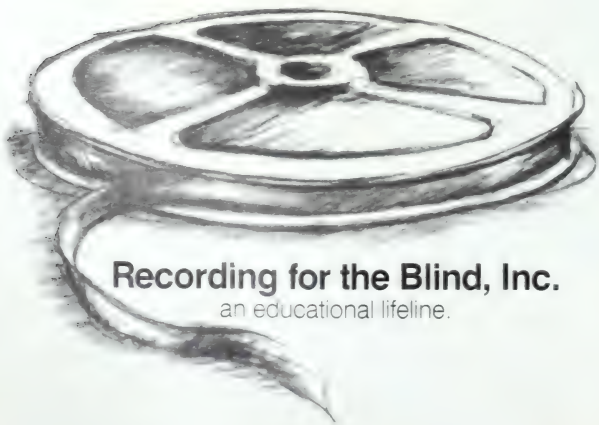
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LINES OF SIGHT

Self-Expression

by Hans-Georg Rauch



The following fragment by Truman Capote, which surfaced in 1981, shows to what lengths—the adoption of a completely different literary style—the author went to break a monumental writer's block that first developed in

the 1960s during the writing of *Answered Prayers*. The eagerly awaited novel was finally published in 1986 in the style, most critics agreed, of Beatrix F. Potter. With this fragment, of course, he was trying something else.

THE SNOWS OF STUDIOFIFTYFOUR

by George Plimpton

¹ "Snows," in this case, is apparently not the material that falls on mountains, but is a reference to a white powder that is arranged in a thin line by such a pusher as a matchbook cover and is then ingested up a straw into either nostril—a practice referred to as "snorting."

² A familiar social figure of the times, in later years referred to as the "Social Moth" for criticizing a party to which he had not been invited in front of a man who turned out to be the host and who threw Zipkin down a staircase, at the foot of which he was caught by Nan Kempner, one of the great beauties and Zipkin-catchers of the day.

³ The publisher of a journal called *Women's Wear Daily*, now defunct.

⁴ The greatest of the short literary agents; often called "Of the great literary agents, the shortest." He was also known as a "great washer" for his fear of germs, a trait he shared with the billionaire Howard Hughes.

⁵ An extremely expensive shotgun model made in England. Not to be confused with James Purdy, a Brooklyn-born novelist and short-story writer, who is 5'10".

Studiofiftyfour, a converted movie theater fifty-seven feet above sea level, was said to have been the liveliest discotheque in New York City. Close to the top seats in the balcony was discovered a matchbook cover¹ bearing the White House seal. No one knows what the White House aide was seeking at that altitude.

IT WAS MORNING, and had been morning for some time, and he was waiting for the plane. It was difficult to speak.

"Can you see all right?" the attendant from the Fat Farm asked as they approached the ticket counter.

"It's okay unless the bandages slip," he said.

"Then it's all fuzzy."

"How do you feel?"

"A little wobbly."

"Does it hurt?"

"Only when I sit down."

He thought about the railway station at Karabük and the headlight of the Simplon-Orient cutting the dark now, and he thought about his enemies and how he wished he had them laid out between the tracks. They would make a long row. Perhaps a mile. Too many, maybe. But he had fought often, and they had always picked the finest places to have the fights. The tea place in the Plaza Hotel with the palms. The El Morocco with the zebra stripes. The Bistro in Beverly Hills. That was where Jerry Zipkin² came out of the dark restaurant gloom that time, blinking his eyes, and he had hit him right along the chops, twice, hard, and when the Social Moth—that was what Johnny Fairchild³ called him, wasn't it, old cock?—didn't go down he knew he was in a fight. Swiftly Lazar⁴ broke that one up, and he thought of how clean and white Swiftly's hands had been coming between them, and he wondered how many bars of soap had gone into keeping them that way, and he was thinking of asking Swiftly, and would have if the Social Moth had not been screaming like the bombing officer that summer evening who had been caught up on the wire at Mons.

Swiftly, about his size, too, a saved Purdy,⁵ though he had not read a book, had mixed it up with some true contenders, though probably not Turgenev. He had driven those immaculately clean hands into the chops of Otto Preminger, who was a movie director with a domed head with not much in it except a German accent. He wished he had seen the one, which was at the 21 Club under the Goodyear-blimp model and the eighteen-wheel rigs that hung from the grillroom ceiling, though he wished it had been at El Morocco, which was a good place to fight, with the palm trees and the high ground off the dance floor where the band played. He liked Swiftly's left hook. If you fight a good left-hooker, sooner or later he will get his left out where you can't see it, and in it comes like a brick. Life is the greatest left-hooker so far, though they say the cleanest ever thrown was Swiftly Lazar's.

DO YOU HAVE any bags to check?"

He came to with a start. The gauze head-bandages from the face-lift had slipped down on one side.

"I'm sorry about the one eye," he said. "But I have two bags. I will carry the smaller one board."

"All right," the flight clerk said. He was a fine desk clerk with high cheekbones and a plastic identification badge that read FARWELL SMITH. He had good hands, too, and it was with pleasure that through the one good eye he watched the clerk tie the baggage check to the handle of the big Vuitton with one hand, as it was supposed to be done if the bag was to be dominated properly, with the good brusque motion of the *recorte* and the baggage check truly fixed. He thought about the baggage itself, jiggling down the conveyor belt, and how it would disappear through the leather straps that hung down like a portcullis and maybe he would see the bag again at the LaGuardia. The LaGuardia was not the same since they had built the rust-colored parking

ilding that obscured the view from the
rand Central Parkway, but then we were not
e same either. He would miss the bag if it
d not turn up at the LaGuardia, and went
stead to the Logan, which was in Massachu-
tts and had the fogs. He would sorely be
oubled if the bag went to the Logan. He had
always packed a neat bag. It was a fine experi-
ence to open the bag up in the hotel room and
e everything laid out just the way he had
acked it, with the knuckle-dusters next to the
g Christmas stocking he liked to hang at the
ot of the bed.

"Smoking or nonsmoking?" the flight clerk
ked him. He answered through the bandages.
e asked for a window seat. Just then it oc-
curred to him that when the stewardess came
y with the tray of steamed towels and the
ngs to grip them, which was what he truly
ed about first class, he could not use the
he hot face towels because of the bandages
his face. It came with a rush; not as a rush
water or of wind; but of a sudden evil-
nelling emptiness.

*He thought about being alone in the motel
om in Akron with the big table lamps, hav-
g quarreled in Memphis, and how he had
arried his enemies list, and how long it was,
d how he had used the Dewey decimal sys-
m to arrange it in the green calfskin note-
books. Under K there was Stanley Kauffmann,
ho had written forty unproduced plays and*

*ten unpublished novels, which had wrecked
him just about as much as any other thing had
wrecked him, but it did not stop him from
trying to wreck people who were writing true
stories about Christmas in Alabama and how
they hung the mule from the rafters. Under R
he had Ned Rorem,⁶ who had a head shaped
like John Dillinger's, who wrote untrue and
snide, and Tynan, under T, Kenneth Tynan,⁷
who had worn the same seersucker overcoat
since the year the dwarfs came out on the
Manzanaras along the Prado road, and who
wrote snide about his party in the Plaza where
John Kenneth Galbraith⁸ had danced the Tur-
key Trot. Under A, he had Dick Avedon, who
had hung snide two portraits of him in the
exhibition that had him young in the first and
like an old goat in the other. He thought how
good the notebooks felt to the touch, and how
he could buy fill-ins at Cartier when the lists
became too long, and how he could look in
them when the time came. Vengeance went in
pairs, on roller skates, and moved absolutely
silently on the pavements.*

HE LOOKED through the eyehole of his
bandages at the standbys. They would
begin to call them soon enough, and
some of them would sit in coach. He
had sat in coach once. But that was when he
was beginning as a writer, and now that he
was successful he liked the face towels and the

⁶A distinguished
composer of the era.
Capote apparently
felt that a discordant
section of a fugue
featuring a tuba, a
bassoon, and a glock-
enspiel (known by
musicians as the
"breaking wind" pas-
sage) was directed
personally at him.

⁷A drama critic
and essayist whose
work often appeared
in *The New Yorker*,
a publication that in
1982 was purchased
by a lady from Du-
buque and is now a
seed catalogue.

⁸A tall crane-like
economist of the
times who espoused
the curious Keyne-
sian theory that it is
better to set high
prices than to pay
them.

*George Plimpton is
the editor of The Paris
Review.*



George
Plimpton

The Snows of Studiofiftyfour

tongs to grip them, and the crêpes with shrimp within and the tall green bottles of California Pinot and the seats that went back when you pushed the button. They had the buttons in coach but they did not have the hot towels and the other things. So when the time came and he had to work the fat off his soul and body, the way a fighter went into the mountains to work and train and burn it out, he didn't go into coach. He went to the Fat Farm where they took his face and lifted it, and took a tuck in his behind as well, and they put the bandages on afterwards. The sprinklers washed the grass early in the morning and the doctors had taken his vodka martinis away from him, and later on, up in the room, they took the cheese away from him, too.

He thought about the people in the notebooks he wished were not there. They were the ones who cut him the way Ford Madox Ford had cut Hilaire Belloc at the *Closeries des Lilas*. Except that it was a mistake and it was Aleister Crowley, the diabolist, Ford was cutting. Well, Ford said he cut all cads. But then he was not a cad. He wrote things simply and truly that he had heard at the dinner tables when he sat with the very social and listened with the total recall that was either 94.6 or 96.8 percent, he never could remember which. The very social liked to talk about each other, but they did not understand him when he wrote about this and wrote about what they talked about at the *Côte Basque* and about the bloody sheet that one of them wanted to hang out a window at the *Hotel Pierre*, where downstairs in the lobby they had the good robberies. So they cut him. Slim Keith, Mariella Agnelli, Pamela Harriman, Gloria Vanderbilt, Gloria Guinness, Anne Woodward⁹ cut him, and so did Babe Paley,¹⁰ whom he loved and who called him "daughter." He knew he would never be invited to dine with Mr. Paley under the great tiger painting at the polished table which reflected the underside of the silverware. He tried not to think about that. You had to be equipped with good insides so that you did not go to pieces over such things. It was better to remember that the difference about the very social was that they were all very treacherous. Almost as treacherous as the very gauche were boring. They played too much backgammon. Lee Radziwill!¹¹ The Princess, who looked fine in jodhpurs, although she never wore them that he could remember at the backgammon table, had a fine nose and a whispery way of talking. She had told him how Arthur Schlesinger had thrown Gore Vidal¹² out of the White House onto Pennsylvania Avenue, which was the length of two

football fields away from the front steps, a lot toss for anyone, but which was logical enough if you knew what a great arm Schlesinger had and how he had gripped Vidal by the laces as spiraled him. He had remembered because was a good story, and it told about Arthur Schlesinger's great arm and the proper way to grip Vidal if you had to throw him a long distance. So he had told the story in an interview in *Playgirl* which was not as good a publication as *Der Querschnitt* or the *Frankfurter Zeitung* but had a substantial number of readers anyway, and so Vidal sued him. The *Process* did not support him. She said she could not remember telling him such a thing, which meant that she was treacherous, either that, that she had a recall of .05 or 1.6, he could decide which, which was not a great talent. He decided he would not take her to Schruns the Christmas where the snow, which he had never skied, was so bright it hurt your eyes when you looked out from the *Weinstube*.

HE HOPED there would not be three nuns on the plane. That had been superstition he had held to for as long as he could remember. It was involuntary, but then he was not a complete madman. It was an inconvenience also. You could not dictate to the airlines not to seat three nuns. Once on his way by air to the chalet in Gstaad he had looked through the curtain into coach and three nuns were sitting in a row and had called out, "Nuns! Nuns! Three nuns in coach!" It spoiled everything about that trip but he knew he could not brawl with three nuns and ask them to defenestrate, even though they were over the Kaiser-Jägers at the time which had the sawmill and the valley above where was a good place to walk the bulldog. Brawling with nuns was not part of the code by which he lived. Besides, if the nuns fought, the odds were three to one, and maybe more if the bishops sitting behind the nuns involved themselves.

He thought about the very rich, who were just the same as him, and how his talent started to erode. Perhaps it was because of the nuns, the gringos, and the cherry-pit taste of the good kirsch, and the margaritas with the salt around the rims, and the cool glasses of Tab the color of the Dese River above Noghera where the sails of the sailing barges moved through the countryside for Venice where off the Lido Beach he had sat on the bicycle paddleboat with C. Z. Guest¹³ and told wicked stories to her about C. Z. Guest. He could no longer write these wicked tales because he had the

⁹ The lesser-known of this group would include Mariella Agnelli, a member of the powerful Agnelli family, which controls the Fiat auto empire. Not to be confused with Mary "Fats" Agnelli, the present light-heavyweight contender; Gloria Vanderbilt is a designer of blue jeans whose former husbands on occasion did not recognize her.

¹⁰ A great beauty of the '50s and '60s, not to be confused with Babe Pinelli, a former major-league umpire.

¹¹ A reader since 1978 of *U.S. News & World Report*.

¹² His most recent book is a roman à clef entitled *Roman à Clef* about an Eskimo family's attempt to settle in Old Westbury, Long Island. An absorbing treatment of a neglected theme.

¹³ One of the famous Cochrane sisters of Boston who among other things danced in the chorus of the *Ziegfeld Follies* before becoming a successful syndicated gardening columnist.

back, the writer's block, which with a wide out like a hyena's, like death, had come and rested its head on his nice little Olivetti, and could smell its breath. He had tried to send away. He thought he would try to tell his friends in the styles of other writers, even toward Manley Hopkins, and then maybe he could write about the great fights if the breath no longer dominated the Olivetti. About the mingling fight with Max Eastman over the best hair in the office of Max Perkins, who always wore his hat indoors and had the sweet smile, and he jumped up on his roltop desk and Scribner's to keep out of the way of the two of them on the floor. That was before Max Eastman went mealy in the soul and became Reader's Digest editor. Or maybe he could write about the time F. Scott Fitzgerald fought the six Argentinians. He would write about the Metropolitan Club when Sinclair Lewis let out a big Bronx cheer at Theodore Dreiser and accused him of plagiarizing 3,000 words from his wife's, Dorothy Thompson's, book on Russia, and Dreiser had followed him to the marble anteroom and hit him two good shots with the flat of his hand which had noed. That was the time that Westbrook Peghead suggested that feuding authors should "ghost-fighters." He would write about the extra cushions of El Morocco where Humphrey Bogart¹⁴ had fought over the big stuffed Panda that they had tried to take away from him, coming for the Panda steadily and lumpily past linen-clothed tables with the single roses in their thin vases, and the hatcheck girl had led like a girl. He had once arm-wrestled with Bogart on the set of Beat the Devil and had won that one although Bogart had said, "Sweetheart, you wouldn't do this to an old character actor." He was very strong in the upper chest then, and still was, and he could kick up the front end of a Hillman Minx off a lid with the best of them. He had not written about the arm-wrestling or about the Ginger in restaurant where Sylvia Miles, the actress, had heaped her plate with a brie cheese, a potato salad, a steak tartare, and a quiche, not eat, but to lob into the face of John Simon, a critic, who was standing next to the director, Bob Altman, who possibly got some potato salad, or maybe even the quiche, on the sleeve his jacket, because he never asked Miles to in his film about Nashville. That was one try he wanted to write about. He wanted to write about the night that Norman Mailer¹⁵ had hit Gore Vidal in the eye at Lally Weymouth's salon—the evening that Vidal had led "the night of the tiny fist." There had been the good remarks. Was it not Christopher Morley who said that a literary movement is

two authors in town who hate each other? Was it not Robert Browning who had described Swinburne as a monkey creature "who sat in a sewer and added to it"? Ayee, that was fine. He himself had called Jack Kerouac a "typist," which was clever but he was not sure it compared and maybe it would not get into Bartlett's Quotations.

The writer's block moved a little closer. It crouched now, heavier, so that he could hardly breathe.

"You've got a hell of a breath," he told it. "You stinker!"

It had no shape. It simply occupied space. "Get off my Olivetti," he said.

And then the flight attendant said, "Will all those holding blue boarding passes board the plane," and the weight went from his chest, and suddenly it was all right.

IT WAS DIFFICULT to get him into the plane because of what they had done to him in the Fat Farm operating room, but once in he lay back in the seat and they eased a cushion under him. He winced when the plane swung around and with one last bump rose and he saw the staff, some of them, waving, and the Fat Farm beside the hill, flattening out as they rose. He tried not to think about the hot towels and the tongs. He remembered that he was a new man again, his face lifted and perky as a jackal's under the bandages and his rear end tucked up and river-smooth. They had drawn him true and taut, so that his skin was as drumhead tight as the tuna's he had caught at Key West and eaten with long-tipped asparagus and a glass of Sancerre with Tennessee Williams¹⁶ sitting opposite. *Qué tal?*¹⁷ Tennessee, and he wished he had been named after a state, too, perhaps South Dakota, or Utah even, and not with a name shared with that peppery man who sold suits in Kansas City.

The plane began to climb and they were going to the East it seemed. They were in a storm, the rain as thick as if they were flying through a waterfall, and then they were out, and through the plane window he suddenly saw the great, high, shadow-pocked cathedral of Studio City with the mothlike forms dancing, the hands clapping overhead, and the bare-chested sweepers, who built up their crotches with handkerchiefs, sweeping up the old poppers with long-handled brooms. And then he knew that this was where he was going. He thought about the smooth leather of the banquettes under his rear end and how he would look out and think about his enemies. We will have some good destruction, he thought. □

¹⁴ A movie actor who had a way of saying "Sweetheart" that brought him fame and distinction. Apparently, he fought his third wife, Mayo Methot, more than the other three. Above the fireplace in their Hollywood home hung a framed souvenir of a fracas between the two at the Algonquin in New York—a receipted bill for a considerable amount of furniture breakage.

¹⁵ The author's latest book is entitled "Why Are We in America?" in which the author denounces Diana Trilling, Jose Torres, thumb-wrestling, divorce, large families, prize-fighting, and gives high marks to the Internal Revenue Service and tax-collecting agencies.

¹⁶ Now a law-enforcement official in Key West, Florida.

¹⁷ What ho!

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Because even though I'd got a raise only two months ago, his pay actually buys about 5% less than it did last year. Less food. Less recreation. Less gasoline. Less electricity. Less almost everything.

For the past three years Ed's been losing ground to inflation... and to the higher taxes he has to pay since moving up a couple of tax brackets. All this, even though his apparent earnings are going up. Ed's plight is shared by most of us. Inflation continues to eat away at our earnings.

Chase believes our nation can adopt a workable procedure for getting at the inflation problem. Such an approach can avoid unwieldy, disruptive devices such as wage and price controls. A more

sensible program would, in our judgment, contain at least five elements:

1. An even more aggressive initiative toward balancing the federal budget.

2. A concerted push to increase business investment by encouraging personal savings and stimulating re-investment of corporate profits into business.

3. A greater drive for research and development by American business so that we can reassert technological leadership and accelerate productivity growth.

4. Establishment of realistic depreciation allowances to permit American industry to modernize plants, remain competitive and continue to generate a growing number of jobs in our economy.

5. Elimination of government overregulation that saps our industrial efficiency and hinders the creation of American jobs.

Such an approach, we

believe, while not radical or revolutionary, can be effective. If carried out, these proposals would lead to increased productivity, more stable prices and ultimately, deliver a body blow to the inflationary spiral.

A few years ago, President Ford labeled inflation "Public Enemy Number One." President Carter has stated that the battle against inflation is his highest priority.

Today, inflation *remains* our largest problem. If we are to reduce inflation's pernicious grip on our society, we must stop deluding ourselves and take the actions that are required. Now.





STORYTELLER

A short story

by Lewis Nordan

IT WAS WILEY HEARD talking and cooling his coffee at the same time. "You heard about all them grain elevators blowing up in Kansas, didn't you?" Wiley was a short, wiry, one-legged man with a red face and white eyebrows. He was retired head coach of the local football team. He stopped blowing across his coffee and took a long, slurping pull, then held up the heavy cup, like evidence, so everybody could see. One or two of those standing around moved in closer to the marble counter and were careful not to turn over a spittoon. They poured cups for themselves and lay their change on the cash register. "See this?" he said. "It's the best cup of coffee in the entire state of Arkansas. Right here in Hassell's Blank Store. Used to be called Hassell's Drug Store, long time ago, back before any you boys would remember." They tried not to notice Coach Wiley pour a nip of Early Times into his coffee from a flat bottle he slipped out of his jacket pocket. "Yessir," he said, "Gene Hassell sold the wrong drugs to the wrong man. Two men, in fact. Federal agents pretending to work on a truck for two days across the street, out yonder by the railroad tracks, before they come in for the pills. On account of which old Gene's pharmacy license got taken away. And so did Gene, come to think of it, down to the Cummins penitentiary. Couldn't get him in Atlanta. It was all full up that year, I think was the trouble. His wife, poor thing, Miss Eva, I swan, she just painted out the word *Drug* on the sign and held a shotgun up under her chin, bless her time. It was that old twelve-gauge of Gene's that kicked so bad, real old gun, belonged to his daddy and ejected shells out the bottom. Remington, I think it was. She pulled the trigger and shot off her face, the whole damn thing from the bottom up, jaw, teeth, nose, and eyes, and broke both her eardrums. Terrible sight to see,

even after the skin grafts. No face at all. Can see, hear, smell, or taste, just keep her alive in a nursing home down in Arkadelphia, feeding her through tubes, and not one pellet touch her brain. It's a sad case, boys. It would break your heart. We been calling it Hassell's Blank Store ever since, and him still in jail, I guess, or dead, but you say you did hear about the grain elevators, didn't you?"

Somebody said he had. Everybody else agreed.

"I know you did," the coach said. "You heard about it on the Walter Cronkite Show, didn't you? They had it on the TV every night for a month, seem like. But I bet you forty dollars you didn't hear what happened to other day over in El Dorado, did you? Just outside El Dorado, I ought to say, over close to Smackover. A dog-food factory blew up. That's about like El Dorado, ain't it? Ain't nowhere but El Dorado, and maybe parts of north Mississippi, they going to blow up a dog-food factory. But you never will hear that one on the Walter Cronkite Show, nayo-sir, and don't need to. The longer they can keep El Dorado, Arkansas, off the national news, Smackover, either one, the better for everybody, is what I say. Hound Dog dog-food factory—and three men are missing, so they tell me. Might of been mule skinner, might it be? I think they was, in fact. If any you boys are looking for work they going to need somebody to skin them miserable old horses before they put them in a can. Over this side of El Dorado actually, up close to Smackover. But that was years ago Gene Hassell went to jail. You boys wouldn't remember him, years ago. Hell, he may not be dead now, all I know. Probably is, though. Probably is dead now, can't drink no more of that paragoric. He probably died his second day off that paragoric, didn't he? He'd been drinking it for

Lewis Nordan lives and writes in Arkansas.

enty years. He'd been constipated that long. He probably didn't know what to think, did he, even there in Cummins behind them bars, or on that hot scabble farm chopping him in the prison cotton, when he felt that first urge to go to the bathroom. Hell, he probably died right off, didn't he? Didn't even have to call the dispensary. He probably got him a shit fit and the blind staggers and keeled over with his eyes rolled up. His old crazy paragonics probably looked like the rolled-up winy shades of Miss Dee's whorehouse on Sunday morning, he was so happy. But not Miss Dee, that's his wife, she's not dead. She's still over to Arkadelphia at the Wee Care Nursing Home, got a married daughter out in California, or is it granddaughter, pays the bills, that red brick building with the neon sign for Wee Care out on the old airport road, a nice place and expensive, too. But Jerry went down in Prescott, out beyond Prescott, well, just this side of Delight, he's the one who owns this place now, Hassell's Blank Store. He's owned it for years. Poor old woman had to sell out right away, of course, after she lost much face here in town trying to kill her husband, and her husband in the pokey. The daughter had to sell, I mean, and no face at all, Miss Dee, and never did have much personality to speak of. But old Jerry, he doesn't get up here for any more, long as there's a quail in them fields and one old sorry dog in the pen. He even to change the name on the front of the store. Painting out Gene's name would be the wisest way to remember a good man, though, now wouldn't it? Lord, but his wife was a boring woman, even back when she had cancer. It was three of them missing, three winners, all of them white men, I believe it is, I'm not real sure about that. Dog-food story over in El Dorado, outside El Dorado County, out close to Smackover, Hound Dog dog-food factory."

WILEY WAS STILL TALKING. "They used to feed dog food to circus animals. Sounds awful, don't it? But it's true. It'd make them happy, too. It'd make a trained beast turn on its master, so I hear. Nothing to be done about a bitch elephant once they turn on their keeper. A elephant's a different story, trustworthiest of wrinkled buggers you ever want to meet, not a bitch. You boys ask around, see ain't right. You can't trust one with a nickel change once she gets sour on life, might as well give yourself the trouble." "Why's that, Coach Wiley?" The coffee-makers turned and looked. It was Hydro, a

gawky young man with a broom and a large head.

"Nobody knows," the coach said, "and don't ask no more questions, Hydro. Godamighty. You get on done with that sweeping before you start asking so many questions. But it happened one time over in Pocahontas. One two y'all might be old enough to remember it. Your daddies'd be old enough. Some little off-brand circus or other. Clyde Beatty or something. Naw, not even that good. They had two old scrawny lions that hollered half the night they was so hungry from eating that dried dog food they give them. Probably Hound Dog dog food, when they was looking for meat, like that place blew up over past El Dorado, except that factory wasn't there till ten years ago, so it must have been some other brand the lions had to eat, but nobody ought to feed dog food to a lion and get away with it. King Jesus jump down. It'd take a worthless sumbitch to do that, now wouldn't it? Worthless as a whistle on a plow, as my poor old dead daddy used to say. Daddy he was a funny little quiet man with rusty hair and deep eyes. Housepainter and paperhanger, and a good one too, and a handful of elephants with their nose up each other's ass like a parade and some scrawny old woman in a little white dress and bleached-out hair riding on top of the first elephant, when this baggy old gray African elephant went kind of crazy. *Commercial-Appeal* said she was in heat and real nervous. That's when they dangerous. Some old boy name of Orwell, from West Memphis or Forrest City or somewhere, was quoted as saying that was right. He claimed to know all about elephants, though I can't say I ever knew a family of Arkansas Orwells. Plenty of them in Mississippi, of course, Delta people, but none to my memory in Arkansas. Unless, of course, they come here since the world war, but I think she was just sick of Pocahontas and circus food. That'd be me. Best thing ever happened to Pocahontas was that tornado in 1957, tore down half the town. They're just about due another one, if you want my personal opinion. Didn't have many teeth, my daddy, and had fainting spells on top of that, because you notice she didn't bother to pick out her own trainer to step on. That'd be too easy. She had to bring down all hell and her left front foot on another African, one of her own people, you might say. She had to step on some little local boy hired on as a handler. Plez Moore's grandson is who it was, in case some y'all are old enough to remember Plez. Course my daddy always did love his whiskey and had a heart enlarged up to the size of a basketball, but the fainting spells commenced long before



Frances Jetter



that come to pass, who I always liked, Plez I'm talking about, and hated to see anything bad come to him in spite of not especially blaming the elephant and never could straighten up his back, Plez, on account of getting syphilis when he was just a boy, stepped right on that poor little child and flattened him out like one them cartoon pictures when a steam-roller runs over somebody. He looked like a pitiful little black shadow some child lost. But you couldn't blame the elephant, I couldn't, having to live cooped up in Pocahontas all week and that terrible sawed-off circus. It wouldn't do, though, but they had to kill the elephant, and you can see their point, especially if that Orwell boy from West Memphis knew what he's talking about, though I still think he was from somewhere over in Mississippi.

"Anyhow, that's what the mayor and aldermen said, got to destroy the elephant. They was agreed with by the Colored Ministers Association, which has now got some other name and is joined up with the NAACP. They was quickly agreed with, I might add, which was the first and last time the Pocahontas town officials and the colored ministers ever agreed on anything, except maybe last year when Horace Mayhan—you remember him playing football right here in town and always stunk real bad, before old man Mayhan moved them all to Pocahontas where they'd belonged all along and fit in so good with the paper mill—last year when old Horace won a free trip, so to speak, to Washington, D.C. He had to testify before a Senate subcommittee on the subject of who cut them eyeholes into the sheets the FBI found in the trunk of Horace's car, that cream-colored Mustang with the rusted top and STP stickers on the front bumper. That boy gave new meaning to the words *white trash*, not to mention who sawed the stocks and barrels off all his shotguns and enough dynamite to provide every man, woman, and child in Arkansas fish dinner every night for a week. But the trouble was, of course, that nobody in Pocahontas had a gun big enough to kill an elephant, not even a hungry old scrawny elephant that probably needed killing."

"Shoot him in the eye." The words were totally unexpected, but the minute they were in the air everybody knew it was Hydro again. He had forgotten that the coach told him to stay quiet. It was obvious from his enormous face that he thought he had made a good suggestion and obvious to everybody else that he was in trouble. The coach stopped talking and looked at him. The others looked at the floor and tried not to breathe.

"Hydro, my man," Coach Wiley said, with

a chill in his voice that galvanized every guy upon the floor, "I always kind of liked you boy. And I know you got your own problems. But listen here. Don't you never interrupt again. Not now, and not never. Not till you get smart enough to know a whole hell of a more about elephants than shoot him in the eye."

"Or," said a voice with an unnatural cheeriness, "maybe you could just shoot him up the butt." It was Hydro again. He had missed the fury underlying the coach's tone. If anybody standing around the coach in the Blank Store hadn't been too embarrassed to think of they would have hated Hydro, and themselves, and they would have hated God for making Hydro so damn dumb. Nobody thought of Nobody knew why they depended on Wiley Heard's approval, and dreaded his disapproval. "It's bound to bust something loose up there," Hydro said, still pleased as he could be to help.

The coach became more deliberate. In everybody but Hydro, breathing was out of question. Some of this began to dawn on Hydro.

"Hydro," Coach Wiley Heard said, "I'm going to say this one more time. Now, boys, mean for you to listen. Are you listening? There was no need for Hydro to answer. He had caught on now. "Shoot him in the eye or shoot him up the butt will not do. Not to interrupt me telling a story, nawsir. And neither will anything else do, to interrupt me telling a story. Are you listening, Hydro? Not nothing that you or anybody else that's going to come into Hassell's Blank Store is likely to think of is going to do to interrupt me. So just forget about interrupting me, boy. At any time, for any reason whatsoever, with shoot him in the eye or shoot him up the butt or anything else. Now do you understand what I'm saying?"

Hydro was quiet and miserable. He said "Yessir" in a tiny whispery voice. He recognized his chastisement. Breathing started again. Throats got cleared and feet were shifted. Some of the little crowd looked up.

WHEN THE COACH finally spoke again, it was not to them, not at first, not exactly. His voice was low and deep and coarse and gravelly, and there was a snort of a humorless laugh behind it. "Shoot him up the butt," the heard him say, almost soundless, and then he heard the low, snorting laugh. A few of the laughed a little, too, they tried it anyway, but laughter, not loud and not self-confident, a

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when they heard it they found no pleasure in its sound. For a few more seconds he let the silence continue. He sweetened his coffee again with Early Times, and they made sure they didn't notice.

When he began again, the tone of his story was immeasurably darker. There were no more self-interruptions, there was no more marshaling of irrelevant detail. The story had become deadly serious and even most of the errors of grammar had disappeared from his speech. If the story were told again, or if it had been told without Hydro's interruption, each person in the store could have imagined it as wonderfully comic, the dark, laughing comedy that underlay every tale he told. But it was not comic now. The elephant, he said, would have to be killed. It would have to be killed by hanging. Some let out sounds that might have passed for laughs, though none of them were proud to have done so.

"By now the elephant was quiet," he said. "I saw her led to town by her trainer, a dirty man and sad-faced. The bleach-haired woman was with them, too, wearing a maroon suit and low-heeled shoes, the one who rode the elephant in the parade. The railroad crane and log-chain were on a flat car. The chain was made into a noose and put around its neck. The giant gears started creaking, the crane was lifting. I remember a blind fiddler was in the crowd and a little Indian boy with blue short pants and no shirt high up on the top of a locomotive. The elephant's feet were like the feet of a great turtle. The hind feet brushed the air a scant inch above the cinders in the station yard. When she was up, hanging there, choking, she lifted the wrinkled old trunk straight up and trumpeted one time, one blast to heaven, before she was choked dead. Her back feet, her gray old big turtle feet, were just an inch above the cinders, a little inch."

Those who listened stood, silent, and held their coffee cups without drinking. One man, whose son stood beside him, lay an unconscious hand on the boy's arm and pulled him a little closer to his side. No one knew what to say, or do. For the moment, during the silence, they forgot that Coach Wiley Heard was in charge, in control of the pause. He allowed a few more seconds to pass. They thought of the beast's trumpeting. They did not imagine, even for a second, that the coach's story might be untrue, that he might have made it all up, or adapted it from an older tale, and now maybe even believed it was all true, that it had all really happened on a certain day, to a certain people with bleached hair or sad faces or blind eyes or Indian blood, or any other hair and face and eyes and

blood he chose to give them, and that it happened in a station yard in eastern Arkansas, in a town called Pocahontas. If disbelief crept in, it came like a welcome brother into the company. They poured it a cup of coffee and showed it the sugar bowl and treated it like a friend too familiar to notice. They thought only of the gray feet and the cinders, the little inch between.

Then it was over. The coach released them. With a sudden, unexpected cheeriness, and maybe even a wink, he said, "You not going to forget what I told you, now are you, Hydro?"

"No sir," Hydro said, certain he would not, but still a little uncertain how to act. The coffee drinkers were able to love Hydro again and pity him and feel superior to him. He shifted his broom and looked at its bristles. Everybody felt confident and happy. Everybody smiled at Hydro's innocence and at his need for forgiveness.

"Shoot him up the butt!" the coach roared suddenly, merry and hilarious and slapping his good leg. "Shoot him up the butt! Great good amighty!" Now they could laugh. They could laugh, uproarious and long. The coach slapped Hydro on the back and called him son and hugged him roughly against him and shook him by the shoulders. "Shoot him up the butt!" he said again. "Got damn, Hydro, I'm going to have to tell that one on you, now ain't I!"

When the laughter was over and the coach had wiped a tear from each eye with a clean handkerchief, he spoke to Hydro in a voice a little different from the one they had been listening to for most of the day. He said, "Let me tell you about my daddy, son. You'd like him. He had to walk on crutches all winter, he had tonsillitis so bad." They knew now they could stay and hear this story if they wished, but they knew also it would not be told to them. They envied Hydro. They wished they were Hydro. They wished they were holding his broom and feeling the coach's warm alcoholic breath on their faces. "Daddy always smelled like turpentine and Fitch's shampoo," they heard the coach say, as if from a distance. "It's the only place I ever smelled the two combination. It breaks my heart to remember." There was a pause, a silence of a few seconds. "He carried this little nickel pistol with him," the coach said, thoughtful. "I show it to you sometime. A little nickel thirty-two pistol, with walnut handlegrrips."

Hydro was happy. Everybody could see that. There was no reason for anybody else to hang around, though. They eased out by ones and twos.

Electric power: What about tomorrow?

You can't stockpile kilowatts for lean years.

Electric power has to be produced as needed to meet demand. And demand is expected to increase sharply over the next two decades, partly because of population growth, partly because of heavier reliance on electric power to replace gas and oil.

Our nation's present generating capacity is 540,000,000 kilowatts. The most conservative government and industry forecasts show that by 1990 electric utilities must be able to produce 300,000,000 kw more—and by the year 2000, another 200,000,000 on top of that.

Figuring the average plant's capacity at one million kw, that means up to 500 new generating

stations must be built in just 20 short years.

There's a problem. A coal-fired plant started this year may take as many as 10 years to complete, a nuclear plant as many as 14. And, half the plants required aren't even under construction yet.

"Can generating plants be built faster?" Yes. *If* some of the red tape is stripped from the licensing and regulatory process.

Right now we're looking at five to seven years just for the paperwork on a million-kw coal-fired station . . . years that cost consumers dearly. Every day's delay in construction, while power plant developers struggle through a jungle of overlapping, unclear, sometimes irrational rules and regulations, adds more than \$300,000 to that coal-fired plant's cost.

Regulators themselves are saying it's come to the point where about 30 percent of the average electric bill goes for regulation.

America can't afford the delays.

Consumers can't afford to pay the bill.

Energy rules and regulations can, and must, be analyzed, consolidated, and eliminated where they serve no real purpose.

A nation as utterly dependent on energy as ours must regulate its utility industries. Reasonable and orderly regulation to facilitate the achievement of objectives for the public good is in the public interest.

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ROBBINS'S COMMERCIAL ART

The rewards of vulgarity

by Gene Lyons

HAROLD ROBBINS is not among the applicants for a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts this year. Probably his tax bill alone could finance a goodly number of deserving authors at least as well as the NEA will. Robbins is, quite simply, the best-selling novelist in the history of the printed word, so far outdistancing James Joyce—who was nominated for the honor in these pages recently by Professor Hugh Kenner—that a comparison of the figures would be ludicrous. Robbins's fourteen novels are not only all in print, but most of them have been translated into thirty-two languages, including Urdu and Bengalese. His publishers claim more than 200 million books sold, and say that more than 25,000 people buy a Robbins novel every day. Doubtless his new production, which will be out this month (*Memories of Another Day*), will linger at or near the top of the best-seller lists for most of the winter.

I haven't read the book, but its summary in the publisher's promotional announcement suggests that it is yet another variation on the formula observed throughout Robbins's novels, most of which I have read:

The epic saga of the American labor movement in the person of Daniel Boone Huggins, "Big Dan," who rises from the rural poverty and hard times of the West Virginia hills to lead the biggest union in America, a career that embraces violence, fierce ambition, lust, and a deep hunger for justice that burns within Dan Huggins even when wealth, fame, and power beyond his—or any man's—dreams have come to him.

In Simon and Schuster's estimate, *Memories of Another Day* is "without any doubt, the novel of the year." The book-buying public, at least, is likely to agree.

To the average hunger artist on the university payroll, all this places the man beneath consideration, regardless of how many less obviously "commercial" authors may have been indirectly subsidized by capital accumulated by his books. Art and Mammon ought not be confused; like the proverbial left and right hand, their respective activities must be kept apart. Certainly Robbins has never kidded himself with talk about the art of fiction and the lonely agonies of creating it. Asked several years ago by Digby Diehl of the *Los Angeles Times* why he keeps writing when he has already earned more than he can possibly spend, Robbins answered:

Because that's what I am: a writer. . . . The day I put that blank piece of paper in the typewriter and took it out as the first page of Never Love a Stranger, I knew I didn't want to be anything else. I looked at it, and said, This is how I want to spend all my life. It's easy. I've always been looking for an easy way to do it. This is a cinch. . . . Next to masturbation, it's the most fun thing you can do alone.

Gene Lyons contributes regularly to a number of magazines.



Elizabeth Van Tuille

IHAVE SPENT a considerable number of hours curled up with Robbins's novels in the past couple of months, reading the bulk of, if not every word of, such hefty items as *The Carpetbaggers* and *The Adventurers*—both in the 700-page-plus class—seeking to determine what the man's popularity is all about. I came to the task case-hardened by the suspicion that literature has been dying and popular taste decaying for as long as they have been tasteful moralists to lament the trend. A couple of the *Canterbury Tales* are parodies of popular forms. *Don Quixote* was written at least partly in order to mock knights errant from the best-seller list. *Gulliver's Travels* a send-up of the eighteenth-century vogue for travel writers like DeFoe, even the scholarly Joyce knew the licentious works of one Paul de Koe sufficiently well to have Molly Bloom engrossed in them. In his letters to his own wife Nora he imitated them quite sincerely. I wondered whether Harold Robbins is indeed as pernicious a habit as the sterner critics would have it, whether his books might fit into the category that Orwell, after Chesterton called the "good bad book": that is, the kind of book that has no literary pretensions but which remains readable when more serious productions have perished.

As a one-time reader for the National Endowment for the Arts and former reviewer of small-press books for *The Nation*, I have been exposed to a fair amount of "serious" fiction in the past several years and find myself no longer believing in the superstition of the literary tribe. Having once been a professor of English as well, I have grown weary of the adulteries of academics endlessly described. Most "innovative" or "experimental" work read seems not only to repeat amateurish effects already achieved by Joyce, Nabokov, or Borges, but to be so wr

out of necessity: so palpable is the author's ignorance of the world outside the English department that narrative animism is all that is left as a subject matter. I begin to wonder, in short, whether readers—supposedly better educated and possessing more time to read than their ancestors—have detected “serious” authors or whether the blame does not lie more with the *littérateurs* themselves. I have many times been confronted either timidly or petulantly by persons of varying degrees of literary sophistication who have been ballyhooed into thinking they needed to read John Updike's *Rabbit Redux* or Joseph Heller's *Something Happened* or *Good as Gold* in order to keep tabs on the demise of something called the “American Dream.” Not only have they been bored, but often felt they had been lied to and their intelligence insulted.

Thus Harold Robbins, *schlock-master* supreme, interpreter of American life to millions: What is it that attracts them? Sex and violence are present in abundance in Robbins's books, but no more explicitly rendered than in the works of Updike, John Ford, Norman Mailer, or Philip Roth. The customary criteria for best-seller status, then, do not entirely apply. And what accounts for Robbins's popularity must be that very American dream I spoke of just now. Robbins may be fairly described, I think, as the laureate of postindustrial capitalism, melodramatist of the generation reaped by the Great Depression and the post-war boom, the Horatio Alger of a people past the notion that honesty and hard work bring just rewards. In such, his books partake of a fundamental ambivalence about the elements of material success expressed nowhere so plainly as in the largely autobiographical first novel, *Never Love a Stranger*, published in 1943. Francis Robbins—Robbins's real name in the Catholic orphanage in which he was raised in New York's Hell's Kitchen—like the Jewish druggist who became his foster parent at fifteen changed it to Harold Rubin—tries to explain to his childhood love how he became a gangster:

For years I've tried to eke out an existence in what they call the right way. . . . I wound up in a hospital because I was hungry and didn't have enough to eat; . . .

because all that Horatio Alger stuff is a lot of crap; because no matter how honest he was, no matter how difficult his struggle, he never got anywhere until he either saved or married the boss's daughter. I couldn't find a boss's daughter.

So much for respectability. Because of the accident of his bastardy, Robbins grew up having the experience of both immigrant Catholic and immigrant Jew in the days before one became assimilated to the culture at large through the agency of the state university. To hear Robbins himself tell it, his youth was every bit as bizarre as that of the characters of any of his first half-dozen novels, all of whom struggle their way up from the Lower East Side. By the age of twenty in 1936—mid-Depression—he says, he had made \$1.5 million in the commodities market after recognizing the need for wholesale canned vegetables and flying around the South in an old biplane buying up crop futures. In 1939 he tried, like his protagonist Danny Fisher, to make a killing in sugar by

buying four shiploads just before the war, but was wiped out by President Roosevelt's freezing of the price. Off he went to Hollywood, where he was making \$2,500 a week as director of budget and planning for Universal Pictures before discovering the joys of writing.

THE BASIC Harold Robbins protagonist has the following history: born a bastard or emotionally orphaned by inflexible or uncaring parents, he has to scratch his own way in an indifferent world. In the early novels he (or she) is always of immigrant stock, although with *The Carpetbaggers*, his seventh novel, which is transparently about Howard Hughes and Tom Mix, he discovered the poor little rich boy and the American West more or less simultaneously. Bereft in the world, the Robbins hero is nevertheless recognized by his peers as somehow special. Thus it is said of Francis Kane in *Never Love a Stranger*:

IT GLIDES
OVER THE PALATE
WITH NARY A RIPPLE.



Common Sense About Population

The United States has a serious population problem: the vast majority of the hungry nations have an even more serious one. Yet nearly all nations, the United States included, lack any sort of population stabilization program. Most do not see the need for one.

In the United States, overpopulation is a root cause of our inflation, our unemployment, our pollution, our energy shortage, and increasing stress and social ills. In any nation, rich or poor, population growth either negates or reduces economic growth on a per capita basis.

The Obvious

World overpopulation has never occurred before in history. Until fairly recently, births and deaths were kept in equilibrium by the natural forces of food availability, war and disease. When temporary excesses of population occurred in one area, there were always other places, virgin areas, to which people could emigrate, such as North and South America after the 16th century.

Today, there is no "other" place to go; virtually all the "other" good land has long since been appropriated. Everywhere in the world, farmers are now working marginal land, because the good land is already in use.

The Not-So-Obvious

World population is now growing at a terrifying rate — about 90 million more people each year.

Overpopulation has not been caused by some sudden increase in the birth rate. It has been caused by the 100-year application of death control (the result of Western medical science and public health technology) without the equally massive birth control which should have accompanied it. Death rates have been cut to less than half what they used to be, while birth rates have been cut slightly or not at all. Result: runaway population growth.

Lives Saved — Lives Lost

In a grossly overpopulated society, the dignity of man and the sanctity of life disappear. Witness Bangladesh, the Nile Valley, or Haiti: overpopulation makes a mockery of human rights.

This raises an agonizing ethical and moral question: if we cannot make birth control effective in a society, do we have the right to upset that society's balance and degrade its standard of living by promoting death control so insistently, continuously, and pervasively?

The further application of death control without birth control will compound existing misery. The "Four Horsemen" do not ride separately: war and starvation are invariably accompanied by disease and death.

If birth rates do not decline, death rates must rise. In many countries, death rates are already rising.

An increase in the death rate means the death of people in addition to the expected number. It means the death of very young people. UNICEF estimates that more than 30 million children under five died of starvation last year.

More People — Less Land

It has been estimated that it takes about 2.5 acres of average arable land to feed and clothe one person adequately for one year. At present, there is less than 8/10ths of an acre for each person in the world. People may already have exceeded the long-range carrying capacity of the land. As more marginal land is eroded, desertification, deforestation and soil erosion escalate: age-old ecological systems collapse.

The U.S. response to the growing food needs has been massive food aid programs. Food aid allows more people to live on land than that land can feed; it allows the receiving country to postpone measures which might stabilize its population. The inescapable result of such a policy is that by saving lives today, a greater number of lives will be lost tomorrow.

We believe it is morally inexcusable to provide food aid to any nation which has not committed itself to an all-out plan of action to reduce its birth rate. And this does not mean "advocating family planning."

The Myth of Family Planning

Family size limitation is by no means the same thing as "family planning." The two concepts are unrelated. If couples wanted only two children per family, there would be no world population problem. Research has continually confirmed that the desired family size in the developing world is four to six children, or more. Obviously, "family planning" by people who plan large families cannot check the growth in population.

Most so-called "acceptors" of contraceptive began to limit their families. But only after these wanted numbers have been attained. By that time the irreversible damage has been done. The problem is not the "unwanted child"; it is wanting too many children.

The Myth of Contraceptive Availability

Concerned individuals working in the population field seem to have accepted the proposition that modern contraceptives are made available to people in the overpopulated countries, such devices will be happily accepted and used.

Accordingly, we have deluged the people of Asia, Africa and Latin America with contraceptive in the mistaken belief that we can bring down birth rates just as we brought down death rates. The assumption that people will do what they don't want to do, just as readily as they will do what they want, is preposterous.

People want good public health: they welcome death control with open arms. They also like children, and lots of them. Contraceptives are often welcome for the purpose of spacing births; but they will never be used for the purpose of limiting family size until the desired number has been

ched. This would be true even if the "perfect" contraceptive could be made available. This is the principal reason that "family planning" has not succeeded in stabilizing population where, nor could it be expected to do so.

Solution

I believe that the problem of overpopulation can be solved, but *only* by motivating couples to have, on average, no more than two children. This might be accomplished through a program of incentives and disincentives designed by each country to fit its particular culture.

Such a program exists in Singapore today. Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew has, in ten short years, lowered the population growth rate to one of the lowest in Asia: 1.3. This exceptional leader, who had to be done, and did it, through a combination of laws, he reversed the tradition of unduly and made small families attractive.

"If you decide to have ten in the family," Lee has said, "nobody can stop you. . . . It's just that beyond the third child, you will carry the full social and financial costs."

"Carrying the full costs" means that delivery fees by law—go up with the number of children. By law, there is no tax deduction for the fourth child; law, there is no paid maternity leave after the third child. By law, only the first two children are automatically enrolled in the local school; the third child may be used to a school where there's room.

Room for anything is difficult to find in Singapore. This tiny island, once the province of about 100 fishermen, is now claustrophobically overpopulated: more than 2,300,000 people now live there. Nearly a million and a half have been added since 1950, each person displacing something else. In Walter Cronkite's memorable description, there are flocks of people, rivers of cars, forests of apartment buildings. . . .

It might be said that the future came quickly to Singapore: this appalling growth is being duplicated all over the world, seizing every scrap to sustain it.

People have stabilized their populations when they wanted. This happened at various periods among the Greeks, the Japanese, and the Irish. Today, several European nations have achieved a low birth rate, through a low birth rate and rigorously enforced immigration policies.

In the United States, however, has no population policy. Because of our astonishing lack of concern about illegal immigration, we have the fastest growing population in the developed world. Every

year, nearly four million additional people are added to our population.

Had the United States stabilized its population in 1970, we could have the same level of energy consumption and standard of living as we do today without any Iranian oil or a single nuclear power plant.

Unless we take the steps necessary to stabilize our population now, there will be at least an additional 80 million people here in the next twenty years. What environmental and economic crises will await us then?

Essential Action

We owe it to posterity to promote policies that lead to solutions instead of catastrophe. A first step might be for Congress to adopt a national policy leading to population stabilization and establish a population goal on a numerical and time basis; then, by our constitutional processes, to implement both the policy and goal by devising such incentives and disincentives as would accord with our own cultural and moral values.

How can we, in conscience, insist on reduction of population growth rates in countries requesting food and development aid *without* demonstrating that we have decided to adopt a stabilization policy for ourselves?

We must equate our births with deaths (our natural growth rate is now 0.7% with the birth rate at 15 per thousand and the death rate at 8); and stop illegal immigration (a recent Roper Poll found that an almost unprecedented 91% of the American people favor this).

It is essential that the President and Congress recognize that U.S. population growth must stop as soon as possible, if the well-being of our children and grandchildren is to be a possibility. If recent U.S. fertility rate trends continue, stabilization will require *only* that legal and illegal immigration be balanced with emigration.

The Myth of Peace for the Middle East

Lack of adequate living space (or even the suspicion of inadequate "lebensraum"), has, since time immemorial, been regarded as a cause of war. The pressures of overpopulation in limited living space have triggered numerous conflicts. In view of the publicity which has attended efforts at peace in the Middle East during recent months and years, consider the following two sets of figures on the major countries involved.

	Population (Millions)		Population Growth Rate (%)	
	1978	1985	1978	1985
Iran	38.2	47.4	3.0	2.5
Saudi Arabia	7.9	3.4	3.0	1.8
Egypt	39.8	50.5	2.6	2.4
Israel	3.7	1.3	2.2	N.A.
Jordan	2.9	1.3	3.5	2.1
Lebanon	2.9	1.4	2.6	2.6
Syria	8.1	3.5	3.3	2.3
Iraq	12.5	5.2	3.4	2.6

Egypt has been unable to feed itself since the 1930s, when its population was about 15 million. Its population is now more than 40 million; at present growth rates, in another 25 years, it will be 60 million.

Saudi Arabia has been food-short for a similar length of time. Its population is scheduled to double in 24 years.

The population of Lebanon will double in 27 years.

Does anyone seriously consider that these countries, with small amounts of arable land, will live at peace with their neighbors?

Dr. Zbigniew Brzezinski, National Security Advisor to the President, referred to the "staggering figures" of population growth in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and suggested (on December 20, 1977) that they would lead to "a potentially explosive condition of social and political turbulence."

How could it be otherwise?

THE ENVIRONMENTAL FUND



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The Environmental Fund does not solicit memberships or contributions, but, if you, too, are concerned about the issues raised in this Statement, and would like to be on our mailing list, let us know.

Mr. Justin Blackwelder, President
THE ENVIRONMENTAL FUND, INC.
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The Myth of Economic Advantage

Many businessmen are of the opinion that a growing population is a built-in guarantee of an increase in sales. If numbers of people alone determined sales, then India would be one of the largest markets in the world. It is not. Argentina, with 4% of India's population, represents nine times the export market for the United States. And Canada, with 4% of India's population, represents twenty times the export market. Productivity and the standard of living are far more important components of purchasing power than numbers.

Continued population growth and its attendant pressures on finite resources cannot be good for business. In 1972, the Presidential Commission on Population Growth and the American Future recommended a stabilized population, stating that "The health of our economy does not depend on further population growth, nor does the prosperity of business or the welfare of the average person."

On the contrary, population increase has consistently been accompanied by increases in inflation, taxes and regulation.

There's something about you, Frankie. I can't understand it. Kids don't usually make me feel that way. But you—you're different. You're like a man, hard and selfish and calculating, and like a kid, soft at the tiny corners of your mouth. You're strong, and when you hold me you're gentle as a baby.

What can a woman do but take the boy to bed?

As free of altruistic illusions as he is of family ties, the Robbins protagonist is always looking for an angle, a hustle, a chance to beat the suckers. So Francis Kane convinces the bookies in New York to stop shooting one another, divide up the territory, and set up a legitimate-looking front. So too Danny Fisher of *A Stone for Danny Fisher*, who succumbs to the riches of the vending-machine business, rackets and all: "Tremendous metal machines that stood there impersonally with their hands in everybody's pockets. . . . Opportunity was lying around in the gutter like a two-dollar whore." Can you see how that might explain to an inquisitive Italian or Japanese the America he sees in the movies and reads about in the newspapers better than, say, Henry James or John Updike? Thus Marja Fludjinski, alias Maryann Flood, New York's biggest madam, with her blond hair, great body, and "hot Polack blood" in *79 Park Avenue*. Thus Johnny Edge, orphaned son of carnival workers, and his partner Peter Kessler, Jewish immigrant from Rivington Street, with nickelodeons and motion-picture production in *The Dream Merchants*. Following opportunity and wealth, however, come the derangements of lust, greed, envy, and pride. The sincere and true love offered almost always in the person of a sympathetic and wise figure from childhood is rejected. Potential disaster looms in the false friend, the flatterer, the bitch/whore ready to eviscerate our tough-skinned, but vulnerable hero or heroine. "Come home," the True Friend and Lover says in *Never Love a Stranger*,

to become a human being. [It's] a chance for you to join society and live with people. A chance for you to hold up your head and belong to, instead of fighting against. A chance for you to come out of the jungle and stop snarling and scratching and torturing yourself into a frenzy of hate against the

really important things around you. A chance for you to love and be loved, to share and be shared with, to give and be given.

It is understood that the Robbins protagonist can whore, betray, and arrange murders without compromising his or her fundamental orphan's innocence. Nobody gets killed or screwed who isn't looking for it. Economic change, Robbins shows, always brings moral change; both in turn bring opportunity. In *Dreams Die First*, Gareth Brendan, a disillusioned orphan and Vietnam veteran, gets rich by starting *Macho*, a magazine devoted to the premise that even *Penthouse* is too tasteful and intellectual for the average horny working stiff.

OFTEN, ROBBINS ANTICIPATES particular themes not discovered until later by novelists laboring in the service of art, or dealt with by respectable literary moralists. Young Marja Fludjinski is raped by her drunken stepfather not long after her mother's death; she kills him in the course of defending herself from further assault. As a slum child, she is naturally blamed and sent off to the reformatory, where she delivers the baby he planted in her. That more or less defeats her romance with Michael Keyes, the clean-cut young Irish boy who is her true love. When she gets out she turns to prostitution: "Maybe . . . I would like a little of the de luxe. Who wouldn't? It's a hell of a lot better 'n livin' the way I am now." In the Thirties, this sort of subject matter was deemed "proletarian" and thought to be the real stuff. By the time Robbins came along, white slum-dwellers had gone out of fashion. Marja/Maryann becomes a "whore with a code of ethics . . . ; you can buy her time, but you can't buy her." Like most of the men who buy her time, though, Michael cannot accept her fallen nature; their second chance is spoiled by a jealous hoodlum who grew up with them and who blows the whistle on her, sending Keyes running yet again. When he later has the job of prosecuting her as a notorious madam, she nobly conceals from her defense lawyer the fact that Keyes's name is nevertheless on her daughter's birth certificate, which would rather damage the state's case. I trust that readers can sort out the

multiple improbabilities at least as well as I. But few American novelists were dealing with the sexual double standard in 1955.

In his fine essay, "Imagining Jew," in *Reading Myself and Others*, Philip Roth speaks about the self- and culturally-imposed moral blinders worn by American Jewish novelists. What are the stories, he wonders rhetorically, of Jewish mobsters like Bugsy Siegel, Meyer Lansky, and Arnold Rothstein? Compared to the private actions of characters like Alexander Portnoy, which nevertheless drew outraged attacks from self-appointed committees of rabbis and the Jewish press, such careers deserved scrutiny. How, he wondered, could the novelist function if he was required at every turn to show Jewish characters as, by definition, ethically superior to any Gentile who might wander into their lives?

Robbins got there first: several of his novels deal with Jewish gangsters and criminals, not as an issue—"issues" that animate literary intellectuals at any given time are manifested outside his ken—but as a fact. Robbins has no politics as such, but his instincts have been both liberal and ecumenical from the start. Danny Fisher marries an Italian girl and takes up prize-fighting on his way to prosperity in the vending-machine racket. Boxers and *shiksas* being equally unacceptable to his father, he is disowned; it is his father who suffers. Catholic/Jew Francis Kane lives during the worst of the Depression with a black family in Harlem and has a love affair with a woman there. Neither is punished by it. Kane also befriends at one point a brilliant black Communist orator whose politics are seen as the natural result of idealism. He lives with a wealthy white artist and is not used by the party. His death comes under the hoofs of a policeman's horse during a riot triggered by an angry white mob. This in 1943, six years before the appearance of Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*.

The dénouement of *The Dream Merchants* hangs upon Jewish xenophobia regarding Gentiles: Peter Kessler, a movie mogul, is swindled by crooked Jewish financiers and his own sybaritic and corrupted son, who convince him falsely that his lifelong trusted partner Johnny Edge is trying to do him in. Edge, a prototypical Robbins hero, is



One of these mayors now runs a city with safer-driving employees, lower taxes and a brand new fire truck.

The mayor on the left saw that his city was headed for big problems. A dangerously high accident rate among drivers of city-owned vehicles and a growing exposure to lawsuits made his community especially vulnerable to liability losses. At the same time, the city needed a new piece of fire-fighting equipment it couldn't afford.

The solution was provided by cooperation between city government and private enterprise.

The insurance company that provides coverage analyzed the community's loss record and safety procedures. The company helped set up a new loss control program which included a training course for drivers of city-owned vehicles. The result was a substantial decrease in the number of preventable accidents.

That in turn made it possible for the insurance company to reduce the city's municipal liability insurance premium by \$35,000—enough to purchase the new fire truck.

We represent a major group of property and casualty insurance companies, and we encourage

communities to participate in loss control programs. These programs can reduce municipal liability costs, help keep taxes in line and make communities better, safer places in which to work and live.

Here's what we're doing to keep municipal liability costs down:

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- Supporting state government legislation to restore balance to the legal liability system.

Here's what you can do:

- Encourage your local and state governments to establish loss control programs.
- Report hazards to the proper authorities.

Affordable insurance is our business...and yours.

This message is presented by the **American Insurance Association**, 85 John Street, New York, N.Y. 10038.

derstands both the Old World and the New, and can be philosophical:

It was simply a matter of money the way I saw it. The fact that they were Jewish was only incidental.... He couldn't understand. His attitudes had been forced upon him by years of persecution.... The history of the Jews was filled with oppression. It was only natural those years should instill in him their fears and effects.... But the picture business was no more a Jewish business than the banking business or the insurance business. If our own company was any criterion, that would be the truth. Of the three of us who started it, only Peter was Jewish. Joe Turner was Irish-Catholic. I was a Methodist as far as I knew. And the three of us got exactly nowhere until an Italian loaned us the money.

Try to find that particular twist anywhere else.

DESPITE ROBBINS'S thematic precociousness, his style is workmanlike and repetitive, and sometimes so overheated it is hard to imagine any reader not laughing. Here is Jonas (Howard Hughes) Cord flying over his father's munitions factory:

Power, power, power! Up here the world was like a toy beneath me. Where I held the stick like my cock in my hands and there was no one, not even my father, to say me no! ... The black roof of the plant lay on the white sand like a girl on the white sheets of a bed, the dark pubic patch of her whispering its invitation into the dimness of the night. My breath caught in my throat. Mother. I didn't want to turn away. I went to go home.

Cord executes a power dive and pulls out—as it were—at the last instant.

Robbins's stabs at erudition are often equally odd, as in the following evocation of the purifying effects of a snowstorm: "I walked home through a white cubistic world that Braque would have given his left nut to paint." On the other hand perhaps the line is just right, since it is spoken by a television executive.

Robbins's narrative techniques do such violence to novelistic propriety as to deserve mention as well. *A Stone for Danny Fisher* opens with a pro-

logue from the grave addressed to the son of the first-person narrator, who, we learn on the last page of the book, was born the night the father died. The rest of the book is told from the first-person point of view of Danny, who must therefore narrate his own death by shotgun. "Now I knew why I had never known peace before.... I was content." When it becomes necessary to include material Danny couldn't have known, Robbins throws in digressions that commence "I wasn't there, but...." Coincidence holds sway throughout and exacts a terrible toll: Posthumous births and deathbed reconciliations are almost as common as fornications.

Unlike some best-selling authors, who research their tales of airports, shipwrecks, condominium frauds, and Mafia feuds quite exhaustively, Robbins does not generally rely upon detailed inside knowledge for his plots. (An exception would be his motion picture-television trilogy, *The Dream Merchants, The Carpetbaggers, and The Inheritors*.)

Not especially racy by present standards, monotonously formulaic in construction and awkward in style, lacking even the encyclopedic detail that might lure the reader through the narrative maze for the nuggets of information he could discover, Robbins's novels must be popular for the anodyne reassurance they give to the great mass of us who cannot afford to fly around the world sprinkling our genitals with cocaine, like the hero of *The Pirate*. If life at the top is as Robbins depicts it, most would not only settle for, but feel positively good about, staying in the middle.

Such lessons are for the most part redundant to members of the literary tribe, who need no convincing. The private lives of the rich and powerful may fascinate readers of Robbins and the *National Enquirer*. But those whose social mobility is of the quiet, institutional sort—the intellectual middle class—prefer to do their climbing half aware. The ambivalence toward money and sway that Robbins displays is lost on readers convinced by the English department that not absolute but all power corrupts absolutely.

For that intellectual middle class, the fundamental appeal of novels like *Rabbit Redux* and *Something Happened* is in their portrayal of the vul-

garity of those suburbs that are in Amherst, Chapel Hill, and Boulder. Compare, however, the following change of views from Robbins's *Where Love Has Gone*, published in 1962 just as the emptiness and futility of the American suburbs was being transformed from a cliché popular in Greenwich Village to a cliché amplified by Bob Dylan, Kurt Vonnegut, and other to America's young liberal-arts majors. The first speaker is Nora Hayden, Robbins's villainess, a nymphomaniac specialist artist and neglecter of her child. She is talking about a low-cost development built by her husband, an architect and war-hero: "He is turning the American home into a conformist, ridden and tasteless cube for pure selfish economic reasons.... Each house looks exactly like the next, devoid of individual character.... I would not even be found dead in a tasteless and styleless a structure, much less live in one." To the Robbins hero, however, as perhaps to most of his readers, such a development is nothing less than a revolution in housing, freeing the masses from picturesque but uncomfortable shacks and tenement "Tomorrow the shovels would come and dig foundations, then the cement mixers. After that the frames would begin to grow where nothing but emerald land had been before."

WHAT I IMPLIED earlier about the superstition of the literary tribe should like to pose plainly as a question. In their self-absorption and righteousness, do the critics and the novelists they routinely approve suffer from an atrophied sense of adventure? Do our most characteristic and "important" novelists—those who devote their attentions to graceful prose styles and technical facility—only tend as a group to write off vast stretches of the American and the human experience as too vulgar to bear close and impassioned scrutiny? Most simply haven't the knowledge of the exact indices of betrayal in a casino operation, or of the ethical quandaries of automotive designers, obstetricians, prison guards, or anybody else who did not major in English, or perhaps in history. And they'd just as soon not know about such things. But Lear was a king, Hamlet a prince; perhaps Ha-

Robbins, the rest of the *schlock-*ists, and the journalists are onto something in concerning themselves so much power and the awful spiritlessness of money. Maybe the moral tone of Vegas is at least as important to anybody seeking to understand Americans as are the sexual arrangements of assistant professors.

Harold Robbins knows this much, at least: the novelist is an entertainer, an entertainer, and a storyteller before he is a moral arbiter. Only graduate students read fiction out of duty; you don't instruct, to use Horace's dualism, unless you've delighted first.

My point is not that Harold Robbins is a good novelist, or even a good-bad novelist in Orwell's sense. What books are similar as *The Odyssey*, *Don Quixote*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Huckleberry Finn*, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and 1984 seem to share are an impassioned concern for detail, a strong narrative, and vivid metaphor. A kind of playfulness, qualities that impress readers long after the topical issues in the foreground have been forgotten. Robbins's novels sprawl so, they have such complicated plots, that such coherence emerges to capture the imagination. His early novels had the virtue of a clumsy sincerity, at least. Now, however, the formula is cleverly grafted on to redeem an otherwise prurient and shallow curiosity. In many another contemporary Jeremiah, Robbins is mesmerized by the glamor he indicts. *The Adventurers*, for example, touches on South American dictatorship and revolution, the oil business, the intricacies of mercantile shipping, international banking, diplomacy, the fashion and movie industries, jet-set wastrels, and the game of polo. Robbins stalks Big Questions, but the repetitiousness and predictability of the formula fails to convince or instruct.

Robbins well spoke of "natural novelists" who seem to attain sincerity partly because they are not inhibited by good taste, and went on to observe that intellectual refinement can be a disadvantage to a storyteller, as it would be to a music-hall comedian." Harold Robbins will never fall into that trap. The man is nobody's fool. Literature will survive vulgarity; it always has. What it cannot survive is bloodlessness. □

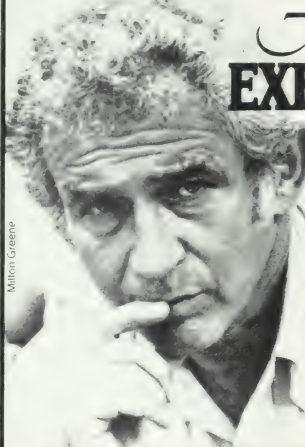
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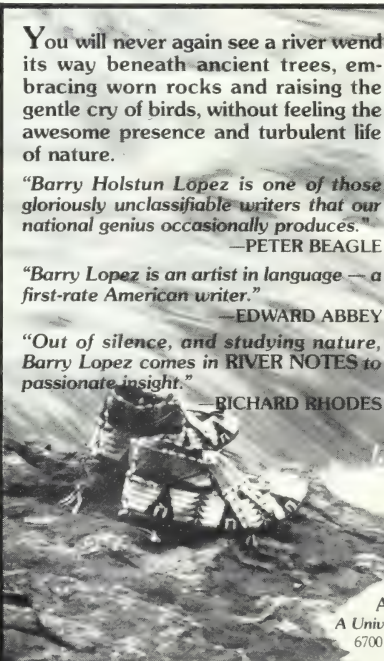
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THE CONSTRUCTS OF A CONSERVATIVE

At odds with the Republic

by Walter Karp

Confessions of a Conservative, by Garry Wills. 231 pages. Doubleday, \$10.

BY ANY REASONABLE definition, a conservative ought to be a philosophical friend to things-as-they-are, someone who can point out the subtle uses of apparently objectionable customs, uncover the hidden virtues that redeem apparent abuses, who can trace with a cherishing intelligence the complex links that bind society into a workable whole. In any commonwealth a true conservative would be an eminently useful voice. Yet in its entire history as a country, America has failed to produce a single important political writer or statesman who meets the commonsense definition of a conservative.

Historically, the typical American "conservative" has been someone determined to overthrow something fundamental to the common life of the country. We have had conservatives who wanted voters disenfranchised and "mass democracy" curbed; conservatives who pined for a parliamentary system of government; conservatives who wanted America ruled by a council of corporate magnates; conservatives who yearned for established churches and fixed social classes. Today we have conservatives who would dismantle the federal government in order to restore "the free-market economy" and conservatives who would have us wage holy war against Russia though the very heavens might fall. So far from cherishing things as they are, the conservative in America is almost invariably a malcontent. Britain has its Burke, Coleridge, and Dr. Johnson, its Pitt, Disraeli, and Churchill. American conservatives cannot lay firm

claim to a single American hero. Alexander Hamilton is often regarded as the archetypal American conservative, and in a certain sense he was. At one point in his career Hamilton talked of overthrowing the Republic and making himself First Consul.

That America produces no genuine conservatives is not a trivial quirk of the American character. The truth is, it is impossible to be a genuine conservative in America. The moment you set about defending the American system of things as they are, the horns of an American dilemma will impale your efforts. The dilemma is simply this: that part of things as they are in America is the awesome fact of our republican form of government and its radical assertion of the sovereignty of the people. There is no getting around that fact. The conservative, for exam-

ple, rightly prizes political legitimacy knowing as he does that illicit power—power without authority—cannot afford to rest, to stop, to conserve can tear a commonwealth to shreds. America, however, all legitimate powers rests on republican foundations; nothing is legitimate in America merely because it is old or customary. If you cherish legitimate power in America how are you going to cherish and defend the existing fact of usurped illicit power—the power, say, of great corporations and political-party syndicates? The conservative must either set himself against such power or set himself against the foundations, which define what is rightful and what is usurped in the political realm.

Walter Karp is a contributing editor to Harper's. His most recent book is The Politics of War (Harper & Row).



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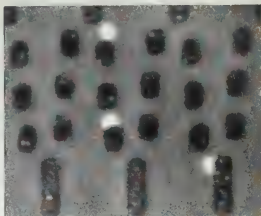
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American system of things as they are will not let itself be cherished as a whole. Prize one fundamental aspect of our common life and you must call for the reformation of some other fundamental aspect of our common life. There is no middle ground in America, and consequently no true conservatism in America. Of this there is no better proof than the elaborate attempt by Garry Wills, one of the country's most intelligent, erudite, and resourceful political writers, to propound a truly conservative creed.

WILLS'S EFFORT BEGAN, he tells us, when, back in 1957, fresh out of a Jesuit seminary, he joined up with William Buckley and the *National Review*. It did not take him long to realize that there was nothing very "conservative" about his *National Review* colleagues. The "libertarian" element in the circle consisted of seminarchists who pleaded for untrammelled individualism; the "authoritarian" faction, at the other pole, dreamed neomedieval dreams of state-enforced virtue and discipline. Instead of cherishing the American system of things as they are, both factions were vehemently opposed to most of it. "They were rebels against the present order—which is not a bad thing in itself," Wills says, "though it is an odd position for those calling themselves conservatives." What Wills wanted to devise, on the contrary, was an "ideology" that would make it possible for him to "admire" things as they are. That sounds like a cold-blooded, not to say cynical, objective. After all, Edmund Burke did not need an "ideology" in order to love the crazy patchwork of British politics. He loved it first and thought about it after. What inspired Wills, however, was not cynicism but a profoundly religious intention. Like his great mentor, St. Augustine, he wanted to humble the spiritual pretensions of the political realm. He wanted, and still wants, to admire the American system of things as they are—"to settle for less," in his phrase—so that politics in America might lose its terrible power to captivate our souls.

He soon concocted a political theory he thought might do the job. He called it "the convenient state," and it

contains, he says, "the germ of everything else I have had to say or explore in the area" of politics. According to Wills, the state must be regarded as a mere worldly convenience, a coming together of people so that they might live in "temporal peace." To ask more of the state would be fatal to peace itself. Against this "convenient ideal," the American state, unfortunately, offered a competing and far from modest ideal, what Wills calls in a telling phrase "the Lincolnian ideal of a state 'dedicated to a proposition.'" This, he realized, was a "kind of masked theocracy." The vaunting propositions propounded at Gettysburg ("conceived in liberty," "all men are created equal," "government of the people, by the people, for the people") arrogated to the secular realm what properly belongs to divinity. Whatever the merits of the argument, Wills had grasped quite early in his career the essential dilemma of American conservatism. To cherish things as they are in America—to "settle for less"—you must somehow snuff out the vaunting propositions embedded in the American Republic.

That was as far as Wills had gotten as of 1961 or thereabouts. Plainly he had not gotten very far. Determined to admire things as they are in America, what, after all, did he actually admire? Very little, apparently. He cherished an ideal that did not exist, namely an American state that *ought* to confine itself to holding "people together in peace." What he opposed was "dedication to a proposition" that, throughout our history, has demonstrably disturbed mere "temporal peace" and that perpetually prevents America from "settling for less" with Old World resignation. As Tocqueville long ago observed, it was because of our high democratic expectations that in America men's "hopes are sooner blasted and care itself is more keen."

The turbulent events of the 1960s had a curious effect on Wills's conservatism. During those years a grass-roots civil-rights movement fought its way to victory—a practical triumph for "dedication to a proposition." Popular opposition to a dubious military intervention shattered the ironclad dogmas of the Cold War—and Wills's own adherence to them. On prime-time television, Democratic party bosses acted like a band of thugs in their eagerness

to crush a rank-and-file rebellion at the party convention. Angry blacks demanded "power to the people" and community control of the schools and police. Americans in all walks of life began demanding more control over their lives. For the first time in a half-century, a putatively self-governing people had begun to complain openly about the state of self-government itself, a topic that our politicians do much care to discuss. After a fifty-year hiatus they did not do it consistently or eloquently or effectively. The democratic upsurge of the Sixties did not come within miles of curbing private power or abating corrupt privilege. The "political class," in the British phrase, remained firmly, if nervously, in charge. For that very reason, Wills who wrote about many of the events of the Sixties for *Esquire*, drew a fundamental conclusion that America is *in fact* the "convenient state" of 1961 "ideal": a state devoted merely to holding "people together in peace," a state whose republican propositions *fact* play no serious part. He is pleased that such is the case, but that, he rightly insists, is beside the point. He believes it is true "empirically," true, because he can demonstrate that this "the way our society actually works." What he tries to demonstrate, in short, is that our republican foundational principles, and propositions are not an active part of the American system of things as they are. The attempt is bold and ingenious, yet all Wills succeeds in demonstrating is that if you cut "dedication to a proposition" you cannot explain "the way our society actually works."

ACCORDING TO WILLS, the chief bulwark of the American "convenient state" is what he calls our "meaningless election." When Americans choose a President, says Wills, we never actually vote for a well-defined policy. No candidate in his right mind would offer one. In order to win, a candidate must muddle, muffle, and dodge, soften rather than sharpen, blur rather than define. Even in the epoch-making election of 1964, as Wills rightly points out, the voters decided nothing except that they wanted a Democrat in the White House. During the campaign Roosevelt never revealed his New Deal plans. Our elec-

us do not and cannot "stimulate, encourage, or direct change," for "our election system is simply not an instrument for making decisions."

The only thing they really do—and, Wills says, they do admirably—is to "hold people together in peace." They realize the "convenient fiction" that, for one thing, elections successfully confer legitimacy on our Presidents: every American agrees that the man who wins by the rules is the right occupant of the White House, which, Wills and others have pointed out, does not mean achievement given the bloody political history of mankind. And, for another, they ensure, as far as human wit can ensure anything in politics, that the occupant of our highest office will be a "safe" man. "Elections are held in order to find the safest, the original man—the man minimal objectionable to a maximum number of people." Because they are without obvious content, sharply defined content, or even sharply defined candidates, our meaningless elections keep the diverse and divided people from coming at each other's throats. "The voting process succeeds—it expresses a consensus, but only by stripping away the debatable, the new, the risky, the cult. It returns people to the few things they agree upon."

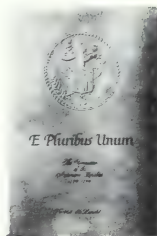
Such, according to Wills, is how our elections "actually work," and to some extent he is right. It is certainly difficult to imagine American Presidential campaigns pitting two clearly defined programs against each other, debating them with logical rigor, and then making a clear-cut decision to the ver- of the voters. To yearn for that sort of "good election" Wills rightly regards as futile. Nonetheless, Wills's empirical account of elections is much too shallow to cope with the substance since Presidential elections are a part of the political system. Consider his assertion that elections "return people to the few safe things they agree upon." The political depths lie below that statement are immense, if Americans agree on just a few things, those things are anything but safe. Americans believe we ought to enjoy equality of opportunity—a New Deal, a New Deal, a Fair Deal, is what these slogans promised: a beginning, a fresh and fairer start. Americans believe and have never ceased believing in their right to an

effective voice in their own government. The politician who assailed these propositions in public would be committing suicide. The Presidential candidate who spoke in favor of both, who promised, if elected, to further both goals, would not be "unsafe" to the voters. He would be unsafe to the politicians who groom and nominate men for high office. It is they, not the voters, who do the really decisive "sifting" of candidates, and what they invariably sift out are men, quite "un-

original" men, who might, if elected, endanger their political power.

In Wills's home state of Wisconsin, Sen. Robert La Follette was a "safe" man to the voters for a quarter of a century. Wisconsinites judged him "safe" (despite a national campaign of vilification against him) because he fought all his life, with admirable courage and tenacity, against the private power of corporations and political-party bosses. And how did La Follette get a chance to prove to the voters that he

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was "safe." By overthrowing a Republican state machine that had kept him off the ballot for years previously because what made him "safe" to the voters—his "dedication to a proposition"—made him a menace to the party managers.

Sitting in a rooming house and township limousine out of the political arena is the first rule of party politics in America. It's a strategy on what he calls "normal politics." Wills describes our politicians as a breed admirably adapted to peacekeeping compromise, but on their rule they rarely compromise. Challenge a local party moderate in a mere state legislative district and you will find your ballot positions falsified, your district lines redrawn, your votes miscounted, your supporters bribed, threatened, or beaten—not in some benighted backwoods but in a middle-class neighborhood in New York City in this very year of grace. The sifting process never ceases, and there is nothing peaceful about it. In the words of Mr. Dooley, a far more "temperamental" political observer than Wills: "Politics ain't bearing."

It is not our "mean-spirited" elections that Wills admires, but a party system—normal politics—that strives unceasingly to drive "dedication to a proposition" out of the political arena. Admiring that is his privilege, but it is a far cry from proving empirically that republican principles play no role in how our society actually works. Simply as a menace to be scotched, they are the shaping force of our normal politics.

AS I READ Wills's account of the voting process, I began to suspect that his empiricism was seriously warped by his "convenient ideal." As it turns out, even when "dedication to a proposition" bears positive fruit, Wills manages to shut his eyes to it. He does so by what can best be described as an ingenious system of misattributions. According to Wills, the basic institutions of modern America are potentiality-brutalizing and despotic: our society is "plutocratic," our economy is a bureaucratic "state capitalism" operated through collusion between government and big business; we are ruled, for all practical purposes, by "the managerial class." Fortunately, Wills

says, America has found a way to "ameliorate the impact of state capitalism." What he cannot explain is why we enjoy such "ameliorations" at all.

What ameliorates bureaucracy in America, Wills says, is the fact that American bureaucracy remains accountable to the people. It must explain itself in public; it can be stopped in its tracks by lawsuits, appeals, or political pressures. It is not the rule raprice and ruthlessness that that it is seen is elsewhere in the modern world of state capitalism—in Sweden, for example, whose constitution expressly forbids citizens from suing the government and whose welfare bureaucrats can tear children out of their homes without the slightest fear of their parents. To the accountability of bureaucracy in America, Wills says, we owe much of our freedom. That is true and well observed. The important question, who it is true. According to Wills, bureaucracy in America bestows blessings of accountability on us as a sort of *noblesse oblige*. The truth, however, that no bureaucracy, here anywhere, voluntarily surrenders power to its clients, as bureaucrats pay to the citizens under their control. Accountability must be beaten out of them with a stick. If our bureaucrats are accountable at all, it is because American people, children of the American Republic, still cannot tolerate openly arbitrary rule. They will abide bureaucratic fiat unless it is sanctioned by formal systems of appeal or the possibility, however remote, of legal reprisal. Wills misattributes to bureaucrats what "dedication to a proposition" has wrested from too successfully from bureaucracy.

According to Wills, our state capitalism is also ameliorated by the modern development of a property right in "services," as distinct from the traditional property right in land. The services include the right to an old-age pension, which Americans enjoy; federal service, and the "right to an education," which Americans enjoy; the statutes of every state in the Union. Such rights, Wills points out, have become the functional equivalent of property right in a homestead—60 acres and a mule—that Jefferson deemed essential to the personal independence of the citizenry. They "tend much to disperse governmental power and spread the tools of modern

"This is an important, indeed, republican, observation. A citizenry worn down by economic fears, kept down by ignorance, and dependent on the precious goodwill of philanthropists is not for long maintain more than semblance of government of the people, by the people, for the people.

Again the question arises: To what do we owe this amelioration of modern life? According to Wills it is a blessing bestowed on us by the managerial elite, which apparently takes its pleasure out from arrogating governmental power in order to disperse it to the citizenry. Yet no managerial elite gave us the Social Security Act of 1935. It was a byproduct of a grudging Roosevelt administration by the Depression-born hands of a people who had finally come to grips with the soul-shrinking effects of the business cycle. What the elite provided was the regressive tax, which Wills himself notes, that finances Social Security pensions, a tax intentionally designed to discourage the poorer half of the citizenry from demanding more property rights in services" under the Social Security system.

For were our free common schools the gift of any managerial elite. Americans long ago demanded them, and not wisely because they were "dedicated to a proposition." Citing Jefferson, Wills demanded free schools that would educate future citizens how to judge for themselves what secured or endangered their freedom. Knowing that such a public education perpetually endangers would-be elites, they insisted that the common schools be separated from the apparatus of government and placed under the democratic control of the local community. What the managerial elite has given us are our corrupted and bureaucratized common schools, which never teach future citizens what secures or endangers their freedom, which teach future citizens that they are merely future workers who go to school, in the immortal words of Lyndon Johnson, "to get a better job." America's free, locally controlled common schools were one of the finest achievements of a republican citizenry, and Wills would give credit for that achievement to the very managerial elite that has done so much to so long to debase it.

For the most pervasive amelioration of our state capitalism we owe our great debt, Wills says, to "normal politics"

in America. Normal politics works to soften harsh conflict and to pave the way for necessary changes. It represents the electorate by balancing "elites against each other." It is operated by what Wills appears to regard as a human type, the subspecies "politician," an inherently mediocre, shallow-minded glad-hander who represents, in Wills's view, the "convenient ideal" incarnate. By perfecting the small arts of compromise, by telling everybody what he wants to hear, by persuading voters to "settle for less," the politician keeps our politics admirably modest. Indifferent to "the Lincolnian ideal of a state dedicated to a proposition," our politicians "give cohesion to society, ease frictions, promote mutual deference." Their "gift" to us is peace.

SUCH, according to Wills, is the way our politics "actually works," and here, too, he makes an observation of the greatest importance: "normal politics" in America is indisputably *not* dedicated to realizing republican propositions. Because it is not, however, "normal politics" is almost the reverse of what Wills says it is. Our politicians "promote mutual deference" except when their stock-in-trade is setting whites against blacks, Protestants against Catholics, ethnics against WASPs, city dwellers against upstate farmers, patriots against "pinks," and Middle America against everybody else. *Divide et impera* is a far more important rule of normal politics than easing frictions and promoting cohesion. There is no better way to keep free men from acting together than to set them at each other's throats, and that is what our "normal politics" does. As Tocqueville observed, a despot does not need to be loved by his subjects as long as they loathe one another. If "mutual deference" exists in America, it is because we can still dimly recognize a fellow citizen beneath the racial, religious, and social divisions that our "normal politics" so adroitly exploits.

"Normal politics," Wills says, gives us "peace," except when it gives us war, war preparations, and what Wills himself condemns as our "Cold War grandiosity" and self-righteousness. Just why our normal politics should be so admirably modest at home and

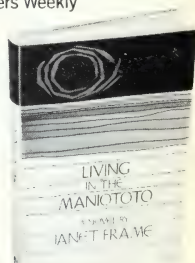


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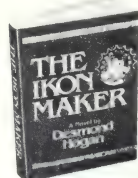
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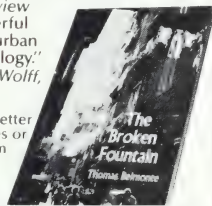
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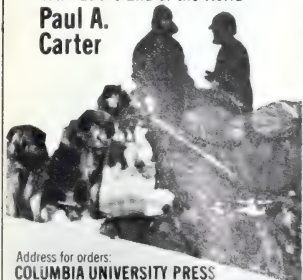
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so murderously self-righteous abroad Wills cannot even begin to explain. He appears to regard our Cold War excesses as a sort of mysterious moral aberration in our leaders. Yet the explanation for this glaring contradiction is by no means obscure. Our shallow-minded, compromising politicians simply know how our society "actually works" better than Wills does. They have grasped, as he has not, that they can only practice a "modest" politics at home because of their "grandiosity" abroad. There is no better way to drive "dedication to a proposition" out of the American political arena than to export it across broad oceans. At home it menaces normal politics; overseas it can only kill soldiers and foreigners.

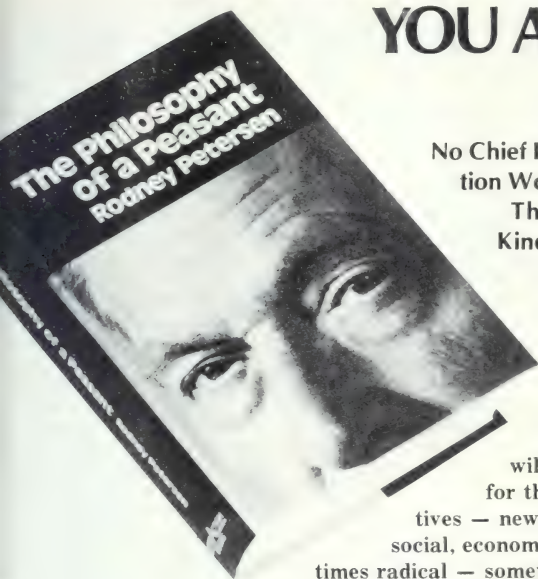
Wills's final misattribution is perhaps the most revealing of all. According to him the most admirable feature of the American system of things as they are lies in the fact that the compromising politician meets a "challenging" force in the uncompromising zealot. These "martyrs and prophets," as Wills calls them, form America's "spiritual elite" and include in their number such historical figures as William Lloyd Garrison, Jane Addams, and Martin Luther King, Jr. They play their beneficial part in the system of things by "calling for moral renewal and difficult change." If "politicians maintain our country," Wills says, "the prophets make it worth saving." These secular saints maintain the purity of their purpose and the nobility of their souls because, Wills says, they operate "outside the essentially compromising political arena." This is a strange statement in itself, one that suggests that for Wills the "politician" and the "prophet" are not really citizens in conflict but contrasting human types. In any case the statement is plainly untrue. King was as much of a public man—a politician—as Sen. Everett Dirksen. It was precisely because he entered the political arena, because he was not a hole-in-corner prophet, that he helped win civil rights for black people and undying glory for himself. He fought for those rights because he was dedicated to a proposition, and he triumphed because he spoke to Americans who could not find it in their hearts, bigoted though they might be, to deny the validity of the proposition. If Americans actually believed in Wills's "convenient state," few people

outside the Montgomery ghetto would have any reason to remember King's name.

So much is obvious, but there is a deeper question involved. What makes it possible for people like King to enter politics in the first place? Why, in other words, does the American political arena remain free? According to Wills, it is our "modest politics" that makes room for the prophets and martyrs. That, Wills says, is the chief blessing of modest politics. But it is not our modest politics that made room for King; all our modest politics did was create the need for King by immodestly oppressing black people for a hundred years. We made room for King was the Bill of Rights and, less obviously, a decentralized federal system that creates the public arenas in every city and town—spaces of freedom where citizens can begin to act and speak on their own despite the dominion of "normal politics." Determined to prove that republican propositions and principles play no part in the way things actually work, Wills ends by attacking what freedom we enjoy to goodwill of "the politician" and noblesse of "the managerial elite."

His empiricism ends in fantasy, the truth, I fear, is almost exactly opposite. If America were merely a "convenient state," if our people ceased to respect the Constitution of liberty and self-government, if they lost even vestige of "dedication to a proposition," we would have precious few liberties, precious few "amelioration" and precious few "prophets" to thank our leaders for. If we enjoy such blessings at all, it is because the "mass theocracy" of the American Republic is as much a part of things as they are in America as "state capitalism," "normal politics," and "the managerial elite." Some struggle to realize our republican propositions, others struggle to nullify them, and politics in America is no more than that struggle itself under a hundred guises, including the Willsian guise of politicians versus prophets. We Americans, James Madison said, are either friends or enemies to republican government. Garry Wills would prefer to be neither, but his choice is not his to make. In the end, one side or the other must claim the name and everyone else in this Republic.

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INTERACTION BOOKS

AN OSTENTATION OF BOOKS

Tomes on gnomes, and the like

by Jeffrey Burke

AS I FLIPPED THROUGH the pages of a coffee-table book in search of a particular sentence to read to the woman I was having lunch with, she glanced across the Formica and said, "That's beautiful." Considering that she saw the book upside down, from a distance of about three feet, and while its pages were being rifled, her judgment would seem to have been less than considered. But she had, in fact, hit on one of publishing's unwritten bylaws: In coffee-table books, one picture is worth more than 10,000 words. Thinking that not all readers possess my companion's intuitive gift, I humbly offer a few observations on the genre.

Cynics assume that the thousands of people who last year bought a book entitled *Gnomes*—which featured illustrations of hobbitlike pudgies and arch descriptions of their dress, habits, and culture—were all senile. Not quite correct: 7 percent (approximately 4,089) weren't playing with a full deck; the majority bought the book as a gift. This is why most coffee-table books are released when the Christmas spirit is aborning. No Yuletide scene is complete without a gracious recipient hefting some massy, gift-wrapped rectangle, shaking it mischievously, and coyly musing to the anxious donor, "I wonder what this is"—and then with the thespian genius expressing pure delight at four pounds and as many hundreds of pages on tadpoles. Who would not weep at being given *The Compleat Chimney Sweep* or *All About Ogees*?

Least the buyer be wary of exploiting this valuable resource as Noel approaches, it must be admitted that, thanks to the energy of publishers, bookdealers are prepared—with tomes

on dance, sex, horses, trout, fashion, freaks, sports, war, vans, beer, whores, and kings—to meet the demands of any shopping list. Yet the most perfect marriage of book and recipient still leaves the latter, on or about January 5, bemoaning the standardization of bookshelves, most of which accommodate no volume taller than the Random House edition of *Ulysses*. As a result, there is but one place, when everything is in its place, to find a coffee-table book.

THE CONSTRAINT has its positive side, for like the *lares* of another time, the coffee-table book can offer evidence of the dweller's sensibility. Only a current best-seller or a soiled *War and Peace* left lying about for visitors to stumble over surpasses the muted, quasi-literary ostentation of a coffee-table book. By simply displaying his mother's thoughtful recognition of his passing the CPA exam, an accountant may belie twenty years of single-minded double-entry existence with a tacit knowledge of *The Joy of Peuter*. His friends may come to regard him as an expert, though the source of his expertise be no more than an afternoon's idle skimming.

Opening the book is a sufficient but unnecessary basis for this impression. Size counts. Psychologists who have analyzed the phenomenon—known as the "weight factor"—believe that because so much importance is attached to the attainment of literacy during the sensitive years of early childhood, when the relevant books tend to be oversize, with few words and many illustrations, a residual association af-

fects the adult's perception of any book fitting this description.

The coffee-table book is, then, a conversation piece that speaks for itself and of its owner, and it does so most often in one of the following idioms adapted from Streik and Whunt's original *Elements of Domestic Style*: first, such books fanned out on a coffee table like huge playing cards (Declarative); three of a kind and one cup of coffee (Interrogative); a pair, two cups of coffee, and an ashtray (Exclamatory); or one book, four cups of coffee, and two ashtrays (Imperative). For the last setting the solitary book should be replaced every four to five at-home.

In the revised and updated edition of *Elements*, published last spring, Streik and Whunt have added several chapters that deal with recent developments in this area. "Why Not the Book Room?" speaks to homeowners who have experienced difficulty in making the transition from copies of *The Book* magazine and paperback science-fiction anthologies to, say, *Tiles* and *Other Tessellations*. "No-no's" provides some sensible advice for the not-necessarily-tasteful: *Roller Disco* on CD, pendule won't do, *The Ultimate Opera* is best for molded plastic, etcetera. The final chapter, which devotes the coffee-table book to a position hitherto denied it, that of *objet d'art*, is entitled "But Is It Me?" Here the authors have supplied a brief, multiple-choice test that helps the homeowner, by a kind of self-analysis, determine the coffee-table book most complementary to his personality. In medieval taxonomy, for example, they make the following suggestions: See Jeffrey Burke writes the "In Print" column monthly alternation with Frances Taliafer-

Everywhere for choleric; *The Best Buttons* for sanguine; *Black Bats* for melancholy; and *Great Big Bugs That Barely Move at All* for egmatic.

ONE PROBLEM that Streik and Whunt have yet to touch on is that of distinguishing between what is ostensibly a coffee-table book and what is only ostensibly so. To put the question existentially, What is the thing in itself? Susan Sontag does not say anywhere in *On Photography*, all coffee-table books have lots of illustrations, not all books with lots of illustrations are coffee-table books. Certainly the thing must lend itself to being, with a pause now and then, to glaze the eyes for an especially active picture. Once in a while a book of text will intrude to tempt the recent mind into focus, but when the facing page proffers an 8 x 12 color glossy illustration of Arnold warzenegger tying a four-in-hand in his eyes closed, who would abandon it for the gray matter of print? Not the compulsive autodidact and color-blind fact-consumer will protest that encyclopedias, dictionaries, and lately, masquerading as reference books, the likes of *The People's Almanac* and *The Book of Lists* are no whit inferior to their pictorial cousins. And, truth, all reference books will reward a glancing attention. But only bibliologists leave them out on their coffee tables. Perhaps the best way to settle the matter of *le gros livre en soi* is to analyze a borderline instance.

The book is *Dragons*,* and on reading such a title one should immediately get a little warning light flash in the reader's eye. On a subject like dragons, replete as it is with myth, folklore, and absurdity, the text could be powerful enough to compete with the illustrations. Sad to say, Peter Hogarth only accomplishes as much in this fantastically skeptical history, despite the fact that he is up against 3,500 years of striking depictions of the beasts. Beginning with the first dragon, Tiamat, the primal female elephant in the Babylonian creation epic, Hogarth explores analogous myths

from Egyptian, Hittite, Hebrew, Indian, and Chinese culture, in each of which a dragon representing storms or chaos is confronted and slain by a weather god. Greek mythology, Hogarth notes, records both a similar encounter in the story of Zeus and Typhon and an abundance of other monsters—Python, Hydra, Chimera, et alia—all of which supply opportunities for more pictures. Unfortunately, since Hogarth does not state definitively what a dragon is—his last descriptive word is “protean”—he can expand his purview to take in sea serpents, leviathans, and just about any zoological oddity. The latitude pays off in the monster-rich medieval and Renaissance periods; the plague of variety in the prose is complemented by the perceptive comments he makes on the interrelation of dragons and religion. Beyond this point in the book, however, Hogarth begins to recover a sense of his responsibility to the two-second concentration span of the typical coffee-table-book reader, and the text happily deteriorates into a chronological grab-bag of tidbits. Of these, my favorite describes the salubrious properties of dragon fat:

Mixed with honey and oil, it cured dimness of the eyes; while an amulet made from the fat of a dragon's heart, wrapped in gazelle skin and tied to the upper arm by a deer sinew, ensured victory in lawsuits.

(Scholarly skimmers of Shakespeare will recognize this as the source of Shylock's litigious perversity.)

Aware that Hogarth's lapses into coherence* might have an adverse effect on sales the publisher has added elements of design that help sustain the reader's inattention. An index is judiciously excluded. If, for instance, one needs to relocate that reference to the dragon's fondness for eating fair maidens, one need only flip through the pages and it will drift into view at any one of the dozen or so places it is mentioned. (Less-enlightened editors

*A truly daunting example of coherent writing in what appears to be a coffee-table book is Peter Dickinson's *The Flight of Dragons* (illustrated by Wayne Anderson; 137 pages; published by Harper & Row in August, \$17.50). The damn thing has to be read from beginning to end just like a real book, and it has only one illustrator. Don't let the similarity of the titles mislead you into settling for more than you bargained for.

might have seen fit to “fix” that.) Most of the picture captions substantially repeat the text, often on the same page, and at times with little concern for what is depicted. Catchy subtitles, reminiscent of newspaper headlines, summarize entire sections: “Dragons keep cool with chilled elephant blood” or “A Swiss barrelmaker hibernates with dragons and lives to tell the tale.” And for those constitutionally incapable of skimming through anything, there is a lesson to be learned from an illustration on page 110, an interesting portrayal of quasi dragons that includes a mink with a fish's tail and a goat's legs, a bare-breasted woman lupine from the waist down, and half-a-dozen other curious creatures. This bizarre masterpiece may be found in the Internationale Bilderagentur in Zurich, but who concocted it or when is a mystery that no amount of poring over the list of credits will disclose. A good example of poetic justice, that: anyone foolhardy enough to risk his eyesight on the six-point type of such lists deserves to be disappointed.

While I was writing this, a friend called to invite me to a party on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Normally I avoid neighborhoods like that, where the inhabitants are known to read and shelve great quantities of standard-size books with absolutely no pictures in them. This time, however, I planned to brave it. My friend told me the evening would include a marathon session of the latest parlor game, which is based on the final chapter of Streik and Whunt's revised *Elements* and is called “Who Am I?” Players select a coffee-table book from a generous supply rented for the occasion. Then each person balances the book on his head and circulates with drink in hand. Points are scored by saying something so fatuous to the individual nearest you that both his knees jerk and his book comes crashing to the floor. A bonus is granted if you can dissect your opponent's personality in the time it takes him to recover his book and composure; but should you neglect to squeeze his shoulder and smile warmly in the course of your analysis, he can demand that you squat down, as if searching for a dropped name, while he makes nasty comments about the size of your book. □

By Peter Hogarth with Val Clery. Pages, illustrated. Published by Viking in September, \$16.95.

POMP AND CIVIL ENGINEERING

Image advertising

by Samuel C. Florman

IN THE PAGES of a recent issue of *Business Week* there appeared a most peculiar advertisement. On the left-hand page was a large picture of an ambulance with lights ablaze, and above it the caption "We civil engineers believe a carload of cantaloupes shouldn't come between an ambulance and its hospital." To the right was a small picture of a civil engineer standing in front of an insignificant-looking railroad overpass. Above this picture the caption continued: "I could just imagine somebody with a coronary in an ambulance that has to wait for a seventy-two-car slow freight to pass . . ." and paragraphs followed elaborating the social importance of engineering. The lengthy commentary ended with "For more information about how civil engineers serve people, write to the American Society of Civil Engineers."

The advertisement's more subtle message, I suppose, is this: Civil engineers, erstwhile heroes of a developing nation, are unhappy about having lost their appeal. No longer do they swagger through popular novels in high-laced boots, or win the pretty girl in movies about the building of the Union Pacific railroad. They are not to be found among the rock stars and astronauts on television talk shows, nor in *People* magazine. What little public attention is granted these days to science and technology is accorded for the most part to physicists and surgeons. And when the rare engineer does make news, he invariably represents one of the more glamorous branches of the profession: electrical, chemical, or aeronautical. The public takes for granted its railroads, highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, aqueducts, and sewers. It is bored by dams and skyscrapers, and—as a result of environmentalism—increasingly hos-

tile toward those who make them.

Civil engineers are understandably frustrated by this decline in status. Nonetheless, it is astonishing to see this frustration transmuted into an advertising campaign. Professional societies send slide shows to high schools and discreet public-service announcements to local radio stations. Occasionally they lobby, and even buy space in newspapers and magazines to speak out on issues. But they don't hire advertising agencies and pay large sums to the media in an attempt to buff up their public image. Certainly not the American Society of Civil Engineers: it is venerable (founded 1852), conservative, some would even say stuffy. When I learned that the society's board of direction had approved the campaign and announced it at this year's convention in Boston, my interest was piqued. How had this come to pass? And what are the broader implications of this curious enterprise?

AT ASCE HEADQUARTERS the staff was ready with answers to my first question. The campaign has begun simply because society members want it. According to James Shea, who was appointed to the recently created post of director of public communications, an extensive canvass of the members in 1973 set improved public relations as a high priority. Three years later, more than 20,000 of the society's 76,000 members were surveyed, and again "gaining public recognition" was an activity most respondents thought deserved more attention. To this end, in 1977, the society's 125th year, a public-relations campaign was approved, built around the theme "Civil Engineering—A People-Serving Profession."

But public relations proved inadequate, according to Mr. Shea. "Re-

porters are only interested in us when the roof falls down in the Hartford Civic Center. If you want to get your message across, you have to go directly to the public, and you can only do that through advertising."

However persuasive the argument, the society's staff and officers seem nervous in anticipation of criticism. They have accumulated an array of reports and questionnaires that support the advertising, and are prudently funding the campaign with an optional \$4 contribution per member (in addition to the annual dues of \$60). Partial returns indicate that at least \$100,000 will be collected, and this is the amount that has been committed. Not a large sum for an advertising campaign, Mr. Shea conceded, but enough to pay for two-page spreads in *Business Week*, *Engineering News-Record* (in the interests of intramural morale), and a special executive-readership edition of *Time*, with some leftover to pay for the society's float in the Tournament of Roses parade (Started several years ago by the Los Angeles members, this anachronism has become an ASCE tradition.) It is hoped that more money can be raised so that *Newsweek* and *U.S. News & World Report* can be added to the list.

I asked if the recent Supreme Court decisions about professional advertising—ruling that it may no longer be prohibited by professional societies—had anything to do with the new campaign. Mr. Shea admitted that there was some connection. "A new category of advertising is coming into being," he said, "and we hope to set the tone."

AS I LEFT ASCE headquarters, I wondered how engineers about setting the right tone for braggadocio. Rationalize it as one will, to advertise is to boast—to puff: the antithesis of t

Samuel C. Florman is a contributing editor of *Harper's* and the author of *The Existential Pleasures of Engineering* (St. Martin's).

RAISE HELL WITH MOTHER JONES!

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Perhaps you've never heard of **Mother Jones**—the person behind the magazine. We're named after an unsung heroine of American history who raised lots of hell herself—challenging, organizing, prodding for change, winning in the process battles that helped institute the first child labor laws in America, help alleviate some of the worse working conditions in the world, and helped win for working women and men a respect and power in the world.

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diffidence traditional to engineering. What would the great civil engineers of the past think of this venture: John Smeaton, builder of the Eddystone lighthouse, who first assumed the title of civil engineer; John Rennie, who, after the opening of his Waterloo Bridge, said, "I had a hard business to escape knighthood"? What would be the comment of John Augustus Roebling, student of Hegel, creator of the Brooklyn Bridge? Surely these men would condemn the new campaign as a sordid business.

Yet modesty, admirable as it may be, is not the essence of honor. In fact, to set too much store by modesty, to seek an aloof dignity above all, verges upon the ignoble. Seen in this light, the advertising campaign is an act of courage for which the ASCE should be congratulated, having risked ridicule and charges of vanity in order to redeem the public value of a necessary discipline.

If professional self-acclaim is indeed to become a new category of advertising, the line between the praiseworthy and the fatuous will be very thin. Thus a lot will depend on the performance of the "experts" to whom the professional societies turn for guidance.

The day after I visited ASCE headquarters, I called on the author of the campaign, Paul Lippman of Gaynor and Ducas, a small Manhattan advertising agency. He explained that the campaign is what is called in the trade "corporate advertising." Instead of trying to sell goods, its purpose is to affect the public's opinion of an institution. There is some financial motivation, to be sure, since civil engineers' salaries are to some degree related to the esteem in which civil engineering is held. But mainly the intent is to improve the image of the profession. This raises morale—a legitimate goal—and also serves to attract talented young people to the field.

"The first thing we look for," Mr. Lippman said, "is a creative rationale, a creative platform. I decided to stay away from big engineering projects. People can't relate to something like Hoover Dam. We have to be more specific and smaller in scale. So I thought we'd start with a single person, a real engineer, use his voice: 'We civil engineers believe....' That has warmth, it's persuasive. Then I

looked for a dramatic situation in which an individual is being helped by a civil engineer. For example, an ambulance that might be delayed by a train unless there's an overpass. Strong human interest."

Mr. Lippman admitted that he wrote the copy for the ad I saw in *Business Week*, but assured me that each of the engineers to be featured was a real person (nominated by his peers) who endorsed every word. "It could be you or your relative in that ambulance," Mr. Lippman said. "To be effective we've got to touch on the needs of individual people."

ONE MIGHT NOT CARE for Mr. Lippman's use of cantaloupes, but his point seems reasonable enough. Even so, there was something about the ad, and those proposed to follow, that I did not like.

I walked a few blocks from Mr. Lippman's office to Fifty-seventh Street and Madison Avenue, where excavation was proceeding for the new IBM building. Seventy feet below the surface a host of men and machines were carving an enormous hole into the rock, and I joined the people who were watching. An intricate pattern of steel and timber bracing supported the sidewalk on which we stood, suspended over the chasm. Walking along Fifty-seventh Street, past apartment houses, office buildings, stores, theaters, and art galleries, I envisioned the complex maze of pipes and cables that lay beneath the pavement. By the time I reached Carnegie Hall, its splendid tile-and-plaster ceiling suspended from 100-foot steel trusses, I knew what was wrong with the ASCE advertising campaign.

The essence of civil engineering lies not in what it can do for one person, but in what it does for the commonwealth. Ever since the first irrigation ditches were dug in Egypt, civil engineering has made it possible for large groups of people to live together. And ever since the building of the pyramids, civil engineering has provided the monuments and public works that inspire a sense of community.

If Mr. Lippman is right in his contention that people can no longer relate to Hoover Dam—or to Gustave Eiffel's tower, the Erie Canal, Yankee

Stadium, the Golden Gate Bridge—then something lamentable has happened to people. Not so long ago schoolchildren studied the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and argued about what the seven modern wonders might be. Now it seems to me no sense of wonder can be summoned at all.

An ambulance's unobstructed passage is the wrong image by which to define civil engineering. Yet it is difficult to fault the man who selected (Advertising, like technology, is one of those abstractions that people like to blame when the world disappoints them.) Mr. Lippman has assessed the public mood accurately: "What's in for me?" But if civil engineers are to advertise, their proper role is to do society's dispirited temper with symbols of civic grandeur.

If Mr. Lippman cannot find the virtues of civil engineering projects which a reader can "relate," let him start with *Twentieth Century Engineering*, the catalogue of a photographic exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art in 1964. And if, after looking at breathtaking photographs of towers, vaults, bridges, and other works, still is at a loss for a "creative platform," perhaps he can borrow a few sentences from the catalogue's introduction by Arthur Drexler:

Engineering is among the most rewarding of the arts not only because it produces individual masterpieces but because it is an art grounded in social responsibility. Today we lack the political and economic apparatus that would facilitate a truly responsible use of our technology. But it may be that a more skillful and humane use of engineering depends on a more knowledgeable response to its poetry.

The present rebellion against materialism and bigness, however understandable its origins, shrivels the human spirit. People begin searching for an inner peace, and end by staring vacantly at sunsets, eating TV dinners in front of a flickering screen, and reassuring themselves that ambulances are standing by.

Civil engineering is an expression of group purpose and communal pride—the counter-counterforce whose time is coming. It is sad to see the profession pandering to the vanity of egoism that it has a mission to transcend.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 1971

Special Message to

ANYONE WHO WANTS BETTER JOURNALISM

(And That Includes Just About Everybody)

at year, Harvard President Derek C. authorized a grant of \$100,000 to establish the "Walter Lippmann House" to become headquarters of the Nieman Foundation for Journalism, established 40 years ago to raise the standards of journalism." Harvard stipulated that the grant be matched by Harvard funds.

The house is a handsome, historic and well-known Cambridge, Massachusetts, landmark built in 1836 by the College carpenter, Francis.

The Nieman Curator and staff, in consultation with several distinguished supporters of the program, have accepted the challenge to match the Harvard grant. They have also determined that additional funds will be required to renovate and maintain the structure, and to name the new headquarters in honor of the great American journalist, Walter Lippmann. Accordingly, a separate and restricted Lippmann Fund of \$400,000 is envisioned to cover costs of operation and upkeep of the house and grounds.

"Lippmann House" will henceforth provide space for all Nieman seminars; study and work space for Nieman Fellows; storage facilities for Nieman archives, and facilities for servicing Nieman seminars, receptions and conferences.

You are respectfully invited to contribute to this effort, a center for one of journalism's most prestigious institutions, in the name of one of its most respected figures and in the interest of a better-informed citizenry.



Sometimes, looking backward in the late light, one almost sees a pattern in the past. I did when I heard that Harvard University had bought the old Francis House in Cambridge for its Nieman Foundation for Journalism and was raising a Walter Lippmann Memorial Fund to endow it. I had been the first Curator (as Harvard calls it) of that foundation forty years ago and Walter Lippmann, already the most admired American journalist of his generation, was one of its begetters, advising the University on what should and should not be done with the Nieman bequest.

All this came together in my mind as I thought of the perfect propriety of a Walter Lippmann memorial housing a Nieman Foundation, which has now become one of the most famous journalistic institutions in the world. In those early days, when I was Curator, we lived in no such glory. We had the occasional use of a lounge in the Yard and we ate our weekly dinner in the back room of Joseph's restaurant in what was then called the Arts' Club in the Back Bay. But even then we were a phenomenon and it was to Walter Lippmann, as I have always believed, that we owed our distinction.

We were a journalists' school which was *not* a School of Journalism, and Harvard, though we could scarcely be said to belong to it, belonged to us. We could use its libraries and laboratories, sit in its classrooms, make friends and counselors of its professors, and generally educate and reeducate ourselves at its expense, and all because President Conant, persuaded by Walter Lippmann, had so conceived of the relation between journalism and the university in the contemporary world.

This I say was my belief at the time though I never discussed it. But of one thing there was no question. It was Walter Lippmann's example, whatever his advice may have been, which supported the foundation in its early, innovative years. He was not only a great modern journalist, he was also one of the first instances of what a modern journalist would have to be if journalism were to serve the new, vast, doubtful modern world.

—Archibald MacLeish

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BLAME IT ON THE TUBE

Why intellectuals hate television

by Robert Asahina

ALTHOUGH I WATCH a lot of television, I am not a typical viewer. I scarcely watch the situation comedies at all; I cheerfully confess to an ideological resistance to the consciousness-raising of Norman Lear, the banal coping of Mary Tyler Moore and Grant Tinker, and the good times of Gary Marshall. Nor do I watch much of the other chief form of prime-time comedy—I refer, of course, to the network news. The last time I saw Walter Cronkite, he was being dumped from the team covering the 1964 Presidential elections.

Still, as different as my tastes are from those of most of the television audience, they are even more at odds with the viewing habits of upper-middle-class, graduate-school-educated folk who, like me, make a living as "word workers" of one sort or another. I don't watch public television, except when certain old films are scheduled. I like my ballet, theater, and opera live rather than telecast. Moreover, I am something of an Anglophobe; I prefer my soap operas delivered in an American, not an English, accent.

And I'm probably the only person I know who regularly watches and enjoys "Charlie's Angels." I'm certainly the only one I know who *admits* watching it. If I sound slightly defensive about my favorite prime-time show, let me add that I wouldn't ordinarily try to make a virtue of my frankness, but I feel compelled to do so because of the overweening hypocrisy surrounding the subject of television viewing, at least among intellectuals. I'm constantly meeting people who say they never watch but who disdain, in detail, what they claim they've never seen. I suspect that, for intellectuals today, watching television is as sex was for the Victorians—an activity to be in-

dulged in privately but not owned up to publicly. Indeed, only two critics even deign to treat the medium with the seriousness otherwise reserved for books, movies, and plays: Michael Arlen, in *The New Yorker*, and, recently, Eliot Fremont-Smith, in *The Village Voice*.

I'm also feeling a bit defensive because those of us who enjoy prime-time television have always been a beleaguered bunch. The medium—never a favorite of social critics—has in the past three or four years come under yet another wave of attacks—by some earnest guardians of America's children (like Marie Winn, in *Plug-In Drug*), staunch upholders of civic virtue (like Frank Mankiewicz and Joel Swerdlow, in *Remote Control: Television and the Manipulation of American Life*), and fire-breathing advocates of revolutionary action (like Jerry Mander, in *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*).

Their complaints are familiar, and overwrought: By emphasizing nonver-

bal experience, television contributes to the declining literacy of the "TV generation." It induces passivity and action, desensitizing viewers and blurring the boundaries between the real and the unreal." The fall in college board scores, the rise in violent juvenile crime, the spread of hyperactivity among children, the lack of any sense of social responsibility among young—all of this is blamed on television.

And these are just the *social ills* attributed to the evil tube. The most recent list of television's alleged political misdeeds makes Spiro Agnew's attitude of several years ago look primitive. The medium is not so much a tool of nattering nabobs of negativism as it is their master—or so it is charged. According to Mankiewicz and Swerdlow, television "invents political priorities." Mander makes the more grandiose claim that

television itself predetermines what shall use it, how they will use it, what effects it will have on individual lives, and, if it continues to be widely used, what sorts of political forms will emerge.

Needless to say, these charges lack substance. Most of them seem to stem from the frustration felt by social critics confronting a variety of complex and pressing problems that defy simple solutions. Television becomes a scapegoat I apologize for impugning motives. I am otherwise at a loss to account for the disparity between the two large classes of complaints against the medium registered simultaneously by intellectuals—on the one hand, that causes incredibly narrow and spec-

Robert Asahina is the film critic at *The Leader* and administrative editor of *Country* magazine.



James Meehan

AME IT ON THE TUBE

ts, such as declining Scholastic
Test scores; on the other
d, that it is responsible for amaz-
y broad and vague phenomena,
as "dulling the boundaries be-
n the real and the unreal." Until I
research worthy of the name that
d support either kind of charge,
afraid that I must attribute both to
intellectual willfulness.

WHEN I FIRST started read-
ing the recent antitelevi-
sion books, I had the
erie feeling that I had
ady experienced most of them. And
rns out that I had, in a sense. The
ent attacks on the medium are
ically identical in form and sub-
e to charges made twenty-five
ago during the debate over what
then called "mass culture"—al-
gh social critics of that era were
worried specifically about televi-
than about commercialized culture
eneral, from comic books to detec-
novels, movies to musical comedies,
rtising to rock 'n' roll. Some of
similarities are rather amusing.
e Winn's *Plug-In Drug*, for exam-
can best be understood as an up-
d version of Dr. Fredrick Wert-
s *Seduction of the Innocent*, the
rious indictment of comic books
was even more hysterical than the
cts of its attack. Like the good doc-
Winn has an apocalyptic and melo-
atic understanding of the effects
tional violence on young minds.
more striking and revealing simi-
larity between mass-culture critics then
television critics now is their atti-
tude toward technology. In 1956,
ard Rosenberg wrote:

*Contemporary man commonly finds
at his life has been emptied of
eaning, that it has been trivial-
ized. He is alienated from his past,
om his work, from his community,
and possibly from himself.*

the reason for all this anomie?
omnipotent industrial society,
h first created leisure time for its
bers and then had to fill it with
nized, commercial forms of dis-
on—that is, with mass culture,
h then threatened "not merely to
nize our taste but to brutalize our
s." And, according to Rosenberg,
his is made possible by technology:

*If we can hazard a single positive
formulation (in the form of a hy-
pothesis) it would be that modern
technology is the necessary and
sufficient cause of mass culture.*

Exactly twenty years later, in 1976,
Winn complained that

*there are many aspects of modern
life that are indeed beyond our con-
trol. . . . We feel increasingly help-
less, and our dependence on televi-
sion is surely a reflection of this
helplessness.*

And, once again, the blame for all this
alienation is laid on a "society increas-
ingly dominated by technology."

Intellectuals, of course, have always
been somewhat less than comfortable
with modern technology—even though
their class description matches that of
modernity itself: secular, rational, skepti-
cal, individualistic, and deracinated.
Yet their class function—reading and
writing books; criticizing society and
one another; acting as secular priests
—has remained the same for centuries,
virtually untouched by advances in
technology. Furthermore, most technol-
ogical developments result from and
demand skills that are at odds with
their humanistic orientation. So intel-
lectuals are understandably hostile and
defensive; for all their opposition to
the status quo, they actually tend to be
rather conservative—and literally re-
actionary about technology—and view
with suspicion any developments that
are beyond their control, that challenge
their authority.

And television is a threat of consid-
erable proportions. The printed, not

the spoken, word—and certainly not
the visual image—is the medium of
intellectuals, and television reaches far
more people than they ever dreamed of
reaching, or dared to hope to influence.
As an example, William Lee Miller, a
self-described "academic humanist,"
recently quoted an ABC vice-president
who was responding to criticisms made
by Miller and others on a panel of con-
sultants regarding prime-time program-
ming. "We made straight documenta-
ries," the executive said, "and got just
3 to 5 million people. That was it.
Nobody watched." Miller added, "A
scholar hoping his book will sell 3,000
copies may find 3 to 5 million people
a curious definition of 'nobody.'" It is
difficult to tell whether that rejoinder
was motivated by contempt or by envy
—particularly considering how poorly
intellectuals have performed on televi-
sion (with the notable exception of
William Buckley).

INTELLECTUALS naturally contend
that the medium is too mass-
oriented to accommodate them.
But one question remains unan-
swered: why they cannot take advantage
of it—somehow. Recently (in *Popular
Culture and High Culture*), Herbert J.
Gans offered one general explanation:
because the American public as a
whole is locked into a "taste hier-
archy." As Gans describes it,

*the major source of differentiation
between taste cultures and publics
is socioeconomic level or class. . . .
The range of taste cultures and
publics follows the range and hier-
archy of classes in American soci-
ety, although the correlation is
hardly perfect. . . . The five publics
and cultures . . . are called high
culture, upper-middle culture,
lower-middle culture, low culture,
and quasi-folk low culture.*

A striking thing about this description
is how much it echoes the terms of
the old mass-culture debate. Until recently,
the conventional wisdom was that the
old highbrow-middlebrow-lowbrow hi-
erarchy had disappeared when the de-
bate petered out two decades ago. As
Nathan Glazer put it in 1971,

*until the fifties, the distinction
highbrow, middlebrow, and low-
brow was critical in discussing
American culture. They have now*



quite disappeared . . . because high-brow ideas . . . have by now captured the old audience of the mid-dlebrow.

I agree with Gans that the old distinction never actually vanished, and that some evidence of its continued existence is provided by the recent attacks on television. But I differ with Gans about why intellectuals should have chosen now to reopen their assault on mass culture. According to Gans, the explanation lies in the spread of egalitarianism in American society, which has provoked a defensive reaction:

Insofar as the economic vitality of high culture depends on very rich people who are its customers and patrons, and who subsidize the magazines, museums, concerts, and other institutions which disseminate high culture, more economic equality might reduce their numbers, or at least reduce the amount of money they have to spend on and in behalf of high culture. In addition, some defenders of high

culture fear that greater equality would threaten the meritocratic basis on which high culture is said to be selected, and that other bases, including the recruitment of women and racial and ethnic minorities to institutions of high culture, would dilute the quality of high culture and the standards by which it is judged.

In short, the battle has been joined again because of what Gans calls the "downward mobility" of elite intellectuals—or the threat of it.

I must say that this explanation strikes me as totally wrongheaded. For one thing, intellectuals are probably enjoying more power and status now in American society than they ever have. The growth of the nonprofit sector and the government bureaucracies has particularly benefited "word workers" of all description.

And egalitarianism has been not a threat but a boon to their ambitions. Gans seems to believe that intellectuals' espousal of minority causes in the name of equality somehow conflicts with the pursuit of their own self-interest. So, in the name of "cultural pluralism," which he mistakenly thinks elites will resist, he advocates a policy he calls "subcultural programming"—what in media jargon would be termed "minority access" and what I would describe as "cultural affirmative action." Yet anyone familiar with the history of social policy over the past fifteen years should realize that, regardless of whoever else has gained from increasingly institutionalized egalitarianism, elite "word workers" have certainly benefited. Aaron Wildavsky has given a good account of how "minority access" opens doors primarily for elites who are not oppressed and are not minorities at all:

In earlier decades, deprived masses were in oversupply, and aspiring elites were in shorter supply: They were few in number and faced considerable risk. By the 1960s, however, because of relative prosperity and the growth of social welfare programs, deprived masses had dwindled, but elites had multiplied. The theory of the oppression gap [as Wildavsky once called it] predicted that as the political price of elites dropped, efforts would be made to drive it up again, by a version of Say's law—supply creates its own demand. The supply

of oppressed minorities was increased, in fact, by relaxing the definition of boundaries (women, over half the population and with most of the money, were counted as a minority), by making stages of life (youth, old age) into sources of exploitation, and by other devices too numerous to mention.

And the instrument for advancing paradoxically elitist egalitarianism, of course, has been government. As Wildavsky has argued, intellectuals and larger class of "word workers" are expert at using public funds to advance their private interests:

High income and professional standing alone do not enable [them] to maintain the status and privilege to which they aspire. Their money cannot buy them what they want, so their task, as they define it, is to convince others to pay collectively for what they cannot obtain individually. Thus government lies at the center of their aspirations and operations.

The most obvious example of collectivization for the benefit of a few is public television. PBS serves "the public" in general but a very select part of it—primarily upper-middle class, college-educated, urban viewers. Left unsatisfied by commercial network programming (after all, there are probably only "3 to 5 million" of them) they have turned to the nonprofit sector to support their viewing habit. And the private and particularly government foundations that finance PBS are primarily staffed and run by "word workers" who belong to a public-television constituency. The daisy chain is a perfect example of "subcultural programming"—although I doubt it is what Gans had in mind.

So it should not be surprising that intellectuals generally exempt public broadcasting from their attacks on television: After all, PBS is an elite medium, not one of the mass media. Since they have, in effect, their own network, why should intellectuals care about commercial television?

WHEN IT FIRST began many years ago, the mass-culture critique was an expression of snobbery, rooted—as snobbery always is—in social and psychological insecurity.

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Intellectuals had been battling for acceptance of a modernist, largely European culture that was at first unwelcome in America. And at the same time, primarily from a socialist perspective, they were fighting the totalitarianism—of both Hitler and Stalin—that had driven high culture and its practitioners to America in the first place.

Their ambitious program of social and aesthetic radicalism initially met with such resistance—not only from “masses” but from the educated elite, particularly in the universities—that it drove some intellectuals to a defensive stance so extreme that now appears almost comical. Reading Clement Greenberg’s “Avant-Garde and Kitsch” or Dwight Macdonald’s “Assault & Midcult” today, I can only recognize the cultural battle—and they are describing. For during the relatively brief span of the last thirty years or so, the aesthetic program of the intellectuals has succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. The avant-garde has been institutionalized and even academized into what Harold Rosenberg once called the “tradition of the new.”

And it was this rapid triumph in the realm of aesthetics, against such initially overwhelming odds, that convinced many people that the old high-brow-middlebrow-lowbrow distinction was no longer relevant to American society. Yet the debate over mass culture was never confined solely to art, politics and economics intellectuals have been far less successful in implementing their ideas (although they certainly have made significant gains, particularly among “word workers” in the media, government, universities, and foundations).

Disdaining the masses has once again emerged—as an expression of intellectuals’ frustration at the public’s continuing resistance to the intellectual political program. Someone or something must be blamed for the failure to communicate with the American people, and intellectuals have been cast out television—because, as Martin Mayer has noted, “entertainment has replaced religion as the period opiate of the masses.” The very essence, not to mention the prosperity of commercial television—dominated by three huge corporations, headquartered by Madison Avenue, and

animated by the spirit of pure mass consumption—is a particularly galling reminder to intellectuals that the public continues to want what they think it shouldn’t have: hair sprays, soap operas, game shows, and “Charlie’s Angels,” all provided by a socioeconomic system that they deplore.

And since intellectuals profess to be populists and egalitarians speaking on behalf of the public, they charge that people couldn’t possibly want any of those things in the first place, so television and the capitalist system it exemplifies must be responsible for brainwashing them into believing that they do. As John Kenneth Galbraith described it twenty years ago,

In one area, the industrial system is uniquely powerful, although less in the propagation of ideas than in general mental conditioning. This is radio and especially television broadcasting. . . . These are essential for effective management of demand and thus for industrial planning. It reaches to all cultural levels.

Likewise, Mankiewicz and Swerdlow charge that television “creates consumers” and “sells a view of the world.” Apparently, Herbert Marcuse’s old notion that popular culture makes people passively accept the political and economic status quo is still the received wisdom among intellectuals.

This kind of willful reinterpretation of reality would be laughable were it not taken so seriously by so many. In fact, the greatest threat to the networks’ dominance is likely to come from precisely what the intellectuals most deplore: the free market in the form of pay television, cable deregulation, viewer-interactive systems, and the proliferation of video cassettes, video discs, and other nonbroadcast alternatives. But, if the current popular literature is any indication, videophobia is so widespread now that I’m beginning to feel a little paranoid. I’m not particularly worried that Mander’s *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television* will convince anyone but the already convinced. But I am worried that America’s love affair with the television set, like its love affair with the automobile, will become endangered. And, frankly, I’m not yet ready to face Wednesday evenings without “Charlie’s Angels.” □

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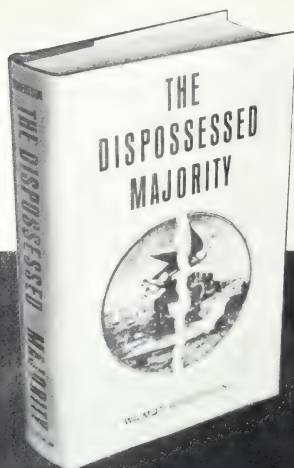
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Silent Treatment Is Given Book Defending American Majority

CENSORSHIP can take many forms. This is the story of a book that was published but might as well have been suppressed because it has been denied avenues of publicity and distribution....

The book is called *The Dispossessed Majority* and it concerns race relations in the United States, recited from the point of view of a member of the white majority. A statement from the publisher about the silent treatment accorded this book concludes:

The censorship of silence imposed by book critics and the book trade on "The Dispossessed Majority" does not prove the abrogation of freedom of thought in this country. After all, the book did get published. But in the final analysis, what good is the freedom to write, if there is very limited freedom to publicize what is written. In order to defend America's largest population group against a continuous stream of often vicious racist propaganda, it would seem that the rights defined in the First Amendment should apply to the dissemination of ideas as well as to their expression.

The Dispossessed Majority, by Wilmot Robertson... is a serious discussion of race, amply documented with references to the literature of the field. The author has read widely and writes with apparent familiarity on many aspects of the subject. He covers the concept of race, the racial composition of the United States, and a split in the ranks of the majority. Some of the chapters cover the [majority-minority] clash in terms

of culture, politics, economics, law and foreign policy. While the author's views are controversial they are expressed clearly and logically as a defense of the white Europeans who settled and developed the United States.

The publisher points out that in the last several decades, the ratio of books about American population groups has been 1,000 to one in favor of the minorities and against the majority....

The press and the rest of the media have almost totally ignored the book.... Libraries and book stores have refused to stock or display [it] and standard publications of the book trade have not listed it. Difficulty was experienced, the publisher says, in placing advertisements....

Among those who speak well of the book is Devin Garrity, a New York book publisher. Rating it as "a major book under any circumstances," he states: "Instead of meekly accepting the assigned role of has-been, Wilmot Robertson, speaking for the majority 'thinks the unthinkable and says the unsayable,' as one reader puts it. And he does it in superb English prose...."

The Dispossessed Majority [586 pages, available in softcover, \$5.95, and hardcover, \$12.00, postpaid] may be ordered by mail from Howard Allen Enterprises, Inc., Box 76, Cape Canaveral FL 32920.

T.R. WARING
Editor

ONE DAMN THING AFTER ANOTHER

TUESDAY, AUGUST 14, 1979

SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE
Editors, Vineyard Gazette:

My wife and I have been coming to the Island for 15 years and I think it is finally time for me to speak out. I truly love our beautiful Island and what I have to say is not unpleasant. This sort of thing has been happening too frequently to ignore any longer.

While driving Up-Island with my family last Sunday afternoon, I realized that it's even getting bad right in Chilmark. I was driving past Cornerway and I couldn't believe how it's been getting worse in Edgartown, but I never thought this sort of thing could happen here.

We got up to the cliffs in Gay Head and believe it or not we ran into this sort of thing. We usually take our daughters up there on Sundays for the rolls and then we watch the sunset and believe me, it was just not the same. We got the clam rolls and then we went up to see the sunset, but it was different when we weren't on the Island at all.

Something should really be done about this, but naturally I don't have the answers. I'm sure that others agree that if we want to keep our Island, we will have to put a stop to this sort of thing.

Lance McFadden.

It's Hill.

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FRIDAY, AUGUST 17, 1979

ENTIRE ISLAND AFFECTED

Editors, Vineyard Gazette:

I, too, have been a summer resident for the last 15 years and am thankful to Lance McFadden for bringing this matter forth in the Aug. 14 issue of the Gazette.

I was biking Up-Island (to save fuel), and I made the same observation in the area of the Cornerway. It was unbelievable. Let me add to Mr. McFadden's observations that the problem is present in Vineyard Haven as well as Oak Bluffs and Edgartown. It is a shock to see that our entire Island has been affected.

As I was watching the sunset from Gay Head, I wasn't sure whether I was on the Island or not.

I, myself, like Lance, don't have the solution, but I believe if we pull together in the spirit of the Island we'll be able to keep our little Island.

Something should be done.

Carol Wise.

East Chop.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

Editors, Vineyard Gazette:

I'm glad someone has finally spoken out. Let me commence by stating that Mr. McFadden may take some consolation in knowing that this sort of thing is not confined to the month of August, but is rampant in June and July as well.

Just recently I was purchasing some frozen halibut portions in the quaint fishing village of Menemsha, when I was mortified to discover that, indeed, this sort of thing is even happening there. This ugly incident is far from an isolated case. I cite it merely to illustrate how widespread this sort of thing has become.

I must caution, however, that we tend sometimes to be quick to criticize without offering any solutions to a problem as bad as this one. May I submit this modest proposal for your consideration.

Patricia MacDonald.

Chilmark.

NOT TOO LATE

Editors, Vineyard Gazette:

I am writing in support of the letter of Lance McFadden in your issue of Aug. 14.

I have been coming to the Island for 30 years and in the early years the problem was non-existent. As best I can recollect it first appeared on Tower Hill in Edgartown about 1960 — five years before Mr. McFadden started coming here. It is pernicious in that from year to year the increase in the frequency of occurrence has been barely discernible.

However, if one can recall the situation 20 years ago, compare it with the situation today, and extrapolate out 20 years hence, to contemplate the situation in the year 2000 is terrifying.

It is not too late; but if complacency persists the point in time when the situation will become irreversible and hopeless is not far away.

George C. Young.

West Tisbury.

HARPER'S/NOVEMBER 1979



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Across: 1. (and 9) m(re)versal-sunder-standings, "MIS" UNDER "STANDINGS"; 7. cater-cornered, "CATER" CORNERED; 10. ginger ale, anagram; 14. (e)argo; 15. short-Chang-e(re)versal, "SHORT" CHANGE"; 16. tri(b)le(s); 18. Kent(tucky colo)rel; 19. date, anagram; 21. twosomes, anagram, TWO "SOMES"; 24. gin (er) ale; 26. box-office; 29. ra(Zorba)ck, "RAZOR" BACK; 31. "UNCLUCED" literally; 34. (and 23D) cross-examine, anagram, CROSS "EXAMINE"; 35. lute, homonym; 36. T-I-ring; 37. saturnine, anagram, "SA" TURN "INE"; 38. par-Ma; 39. e(g)rets, anagram; 40. softer, anagram. *Down:* 1. smacks, two meanings; 2. ti(re)versal-the; 3. a-si(re)versal-an; 4. d(ig)s, anagram; 5. floundering, pun, "FLO" UNDER "ING"; 6. gear, anagram; 7. c(a-BB)age; 8. alo(n)e; 11. sti-rup, reversal, "STIRR" UP; 13. piedmont, anagram of "do me" in "pint", PIED "MONT"; 17. S-end; 19. f(lop)up-ancies, FLIP "PANCIES"; 20. double time, two meanings, DOUBLE "TIME"; 22. m-o-z-art; 25. enter(pri-s)ing, "ENTERP" RISING; 26. boxing, two meanings; 27. fun-G-U-S; 28. cloverleaf, pun, "CL" OVER "LEAF"; 30. rick, hidden; 32. ne(S)t; 33. debar, anagram.

PUZZLE

CIRCUITOUS REASONING

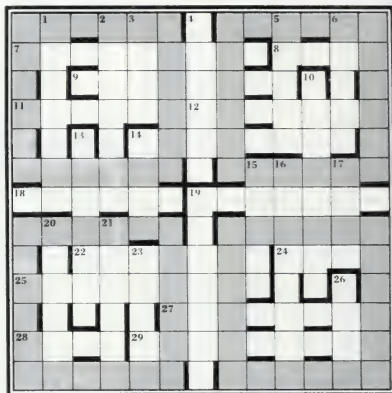
by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

This month's instructions:

Each shaded circuit of squares is occupied by a series of three words proceeding clockwise one after the other and not overlapping. *Superimposed* on this progression is another series of three non-overlapping words, also clockwise. No word in one progression begins in the same square as a word in the other. In the example here, the sequences MANQUE/ENDOMORPH/ANGER and QUEENDOM/ORPHAN/GERMAN appear. All words in both series are clued together for each circuit. Solvers must determine the order of words in each circuit, and where each circuit is to be placed in the diagram.

Answers include four proper words. Although a common word, 28A is not in all dictionaries. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page TK.



CIRCUIT A

- You can make rum be brown (5)
Mews, snarls, bleats (6)
Great looker is true love, Mom, true love (6)
Many anesthetics? (7)
Set aside gold picture (7)
Wheels become tangled on R2D2, for one (9)

CIRCUIT B

- Place to sleep on company time (3)
Actor's part is deceiving around the end of *Dancin'* (5)
Crush tight (6)
Half-chic orange bedroom (7)
Perfume ingredient in "Grab Me" (new make-up)—gentleman flipped (9)
Hash-slinger in Southern beauty's opposite (10)

CIRCUIT C

- Lily backs off from sea god (4)
Heat waves for bad blood (4)
Exercise the waver of any kind at all (8)
Arab ally hoodwinked holder of big PR job (8)
Who goes tearing around a circle becomes cooler (8)
Exceedingly confining dance, only in words (8)

CIRCUIT D

- Smokie, nasty sled dog (6)
Fires or, contrarily, employs (6)
Translation of "I'm O.K. . . ." on Japanese wrap (6)
Dancing troupes like rock (7)
No holy man takes liquor for a home remedy (7)
Bum mutters about quietly disgraceful woman (8)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Circuitous Reasoning, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by November 13. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year sub-

ACROSS

- Stiff tests? I use pot as treatment (9)
- Save one first to make ends meet (4)
- The start of "Gimme Shelter"—hit for musical group (4, 4)
- Getting up without being clothed by clothing is disgraceful act (6)
- Bachelor party people stomach (7)
- Drinks, therefore the prosecutor explodes (4, 4)
- Bishop beamed and sounded like an ass (6)
- Soft-spoken about first tobacco (7)
- Parsees' letters could be construed as slander (7)
- Articulated curves for boats (4)
- Prisoner arranged what Prince Albert did with Victoria? (4)
- C.I.'s prose is revised for "The Tattler" (8)
- Truck jockey is me (4)
- What the bride wears for real, so it's said (9)

DOWN

- The devil's match (7)
- Laugh about resort (Lido) and Spanish vacation (7)
- Frank subject (4)
- Bug disreputable person in spy outfit (6)
- Upset at disapproving expression during Prohibition (5)
- Poets function in manuscript (5)
- Rulers contract distemper or scabies (8)
- Some Westerners cry on making a discovery in cracked nuts (7)
- Female and male passenger on ark (4)
- Second of many colors—it's the old saw! (5)
- Slovenly matron is student of Caesar's time (8)
- Grade could be void with 50 factored in (4)
- It's funny drawing nothing in box (7)
- Selected hundred socks by name (6)
- Heads off mass jail assault (6)
- Sharpen up openings (5)
- Spring apple, cored and cooked (4)

scription to *Harper's*. The solution will be printed in the December issue. Winners' names will be printed in the January issue. Winners of the September puzzle, "Stereo Components," are Bruce Mechanic, Cliffwood, New Jersey; Santo Berenato, New York, New York; and Norton Black, Tucson, Arizona.

is disastrous



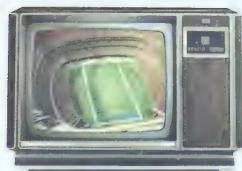
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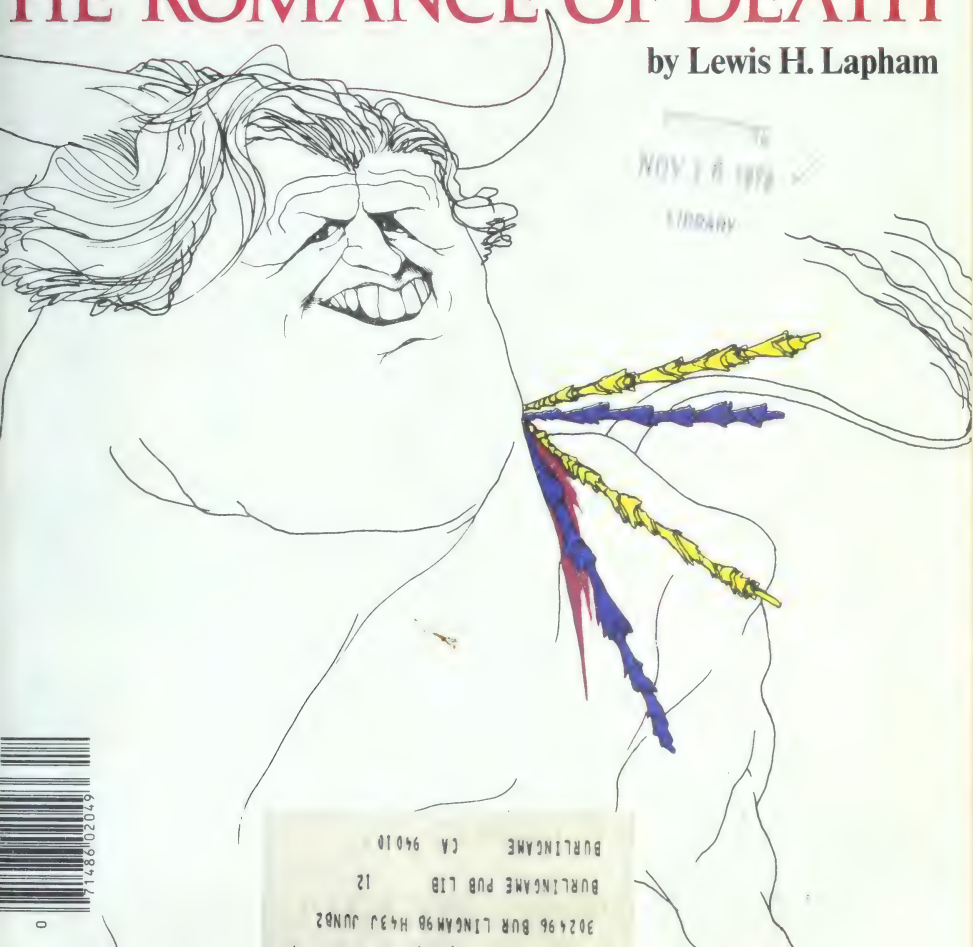
by Wayne Biddle

December 1979 \$1.50

Harper's

EDWARD KENNEDY AND THE ROMANCE OF DEATH

by Lewis H. Lapham



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Benson & Hedges Lights

"B&H,
I like your
style."

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11mg
tar

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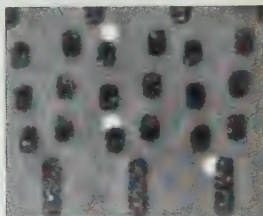
The presence or absence of bubbles (the white dots in the photo at right) represent bits of information—ones and zeroes. They can be moved about at high speeds to perform memory and logic functions. Two perforated metal sheets (the holes appear as dark rectangles in the photo) create the alternating magnetic field that moves the bubbles around.

Putting them to work

Bubble memories have a simple structure and are relatively inexpensive to make. They are rugged and reliable. They use little energy and do not lose the information stored in them even if power is lost.

That's why the Bell System uses bubble memories, manufactured by Western Electric, for storing recorded voice messages such as: "The number you have dialed..." We're also using them for testing microwave transmission systems that carry voice, data, and television signals. Someday, a bubble chip the size of a postage stamp may store the contents of an entire telephone directory.

Magnetic bubble memories were invented at Bell Labs in 1966. Since then, we've been improving the technology constantly. With our latest advance—using the perforated metal



In this photo, magnetic bubbles (white dots) are magnified 1,000 times.

sheets, instead of a pair of external coils, to move the bubbles—we've been able to cut the size of bubble devices by about a third, move the bubbles ten times faster, and cram four times as many of them on a chip.

Bubble devices are being put to use in telecommunications, data processing, and consumer electronics industries.

Bubbles are particularly attractive in combination with microprocessors, providing program storage for a computer on a chip of silicon.

Inventions such as magnetic bubbles don't occur every day at Bell Labs. But innovation is an everyday occurrence. Our bubble patents are among nearly 19,000 we've received since our incorporation in 1925. That's an average of nearly two per working day.

Often our inventions—such as magnetic bubbles—find use in other industries. But always, the ultimate goal of our work is better service for Bell System customers.

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Should Government Do More To Encourage Energy Conservation?

Conservation offers faster energy savings.

America's efforts to reduce its dependence on imported oil have most recently centered on the supply side of the energy equation. We've looked at coal, nuclear, solar and synthetic fuels and even for more domestic oil and gas, all of which have a place in the nation's energy future.

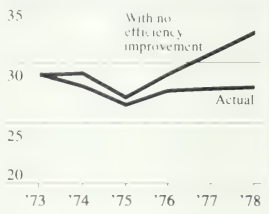
But a recent study from the Harvard Business School (*Energy Future: Report of the Energy Project at the Harvard Business School*. Edited by Robert Stobaugh and Daniel Yergin. Random House, 1979.) articulates a harsh reality in the outlook: there's no quick fix. As the study notes, technical, economic and political factors often combine to delay—for better or worse—the development of these additional sources of energy.

The urgency in these conclusions is loud and clear. If only modest amounts of new energy are available on the supply side in the near term, the nation needs a *transitional* energy source. Compelling evidence indicates that conservation—new energy from the *demand* side—is the fastest, cheapest, cleanest and most abundant new energy around. According to Stobaugh and Yergin, appropriate public policies could stimulate enough "extra conservation" to reduce imported oil's share of America's total energy supply from 24 percent in 1977 to 17 percent by the late 1980's. But how do we get "extra conservation"?

Higher energy prices aren't enough.

It's true that the rapid increase in energy prices since 1973 has been a powerful incentive to conserve.

Industrial Energy Use
(Quadrillion Btu's)



Improvements in industrial energy efficiency, for example, saved the equivalent of two million barrels of oil per day in 1978 over what would have been required to do the same job in 1973.

Yet higher prices can't induce *all* the conservation we need to cut our dependence on foreign oil significantly in the next ten years. The irony is one well known to any consumer: sometimes you just can't afford to spend money in order to save money.

In this sense, homeowners, commercial property owners and industry are all in the same boat. They have to choose among competing demands on their financial resources—and can't make all the energy conservation investments they need. The result is that there's less private investment in energy conservation than national priorities would otherwise require.

New incentives are needed.

Proposals to encourage greater production of "conservation energy" are now being considered in the Congress. Together with the phased decontrol of energy prices, they offer important

new incentives to help reduce America's dependence on imported oil.

The leading proposals—sponsored by Senators Kennedy and Durkin and Senators Wallop and Simpson—come at a critical time. Many consumers and companies have already completed the obvious projects that conserve energy at relatively little expense. What lies ahead are the big ticket items, things like new furnaces and new factories which embody new conservation technologies.

The Senators are proposing financial incentives to speed the nation's investment in energy conservation projects. The mechanisms under consideration vary considerably, and some will doubtless prove more effective in delivering "conservation energy" than others. But we think such approaches—which rely on a combination of public incentives and private judgments—are powerful tools for achieving energy security.

For more information, write "Conservation," Union Carbide Corporation, Box H-23, 270 Park Avenue, New York, New York 10017.



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LETTERS

On speed

Because we enjoy reading things with which we agree, I thoroughly enjoyed Louis T. Grant's observations ["Fast Folk," October]. About ten years ago, when all the young mothers my age were joining Junior Service League, I began to make very comments about the ironies of their hiring Chicano maids to take care of their children so that they could spend their time at the day-care center helping underprivileged Chicano children. Though it might have decreased the cash flow somewhat in my Texas border town, it just seemed sensible for everyone to stay home and take care of their own.

ROSEMARY FALLS
McGregor, Texas

In all fairness, I must say that Mr. Grant has barbecued poor Charlotte Soule on the skewers of pretension and superficiality. But he has done it mercifully and skillfully, and his point is well taken. Why do we continue to glorify the will and ambition of people who are only willful and ambitious because they lack the strength and courage to be anything else?

In this age, as in all ages past, there are two types of people: the sheep and the goats. A sheep follows the herd, as Charlotte Soule does when she aspires to become a stereotype fit for *Woman's Day*; a goat follows its own path, as Louis T. Grant does when he leaves the closet to confess that he thinks—and slowly, at that.

MICHAEL PRIESTLY
Amherst, Mass.

Louis T. Grant's nasty article about Charlotte Soule boils down to the same old message: ambitious women neglect

their children, castrate their husbands and deserve to be publicly humiliated. I think that the real source of Mr. Grant's dyspepsia is that, in a culture in which salary is an indication of the value that society places on one's work as a Manager of Corporate Financial Planning and Analysis (no matter how Mr. Grant tries to demean her title), I am not only busier but also more highly paid and respected than is a community-college teacher such as Mr. Grant (and myself). Further, if Mr. Grant were living with such a woman, she might actually expect him to do most of the housework.

I am even more concerned about Harper's editorial policy of intermittently publishing articles that are flagrantly sexist. May I suggest, as a rule of thumb, that you check articles about women for sexism by substituting for each occurrence of the words *woman*, *wife*, *mother*, et cetera the word *black*. If you would be afraid to publish the latter version, you should refrain from publishing the former.

JANET MAKE
Los Angeles, Calif.

Kudos to Mr. Grant for his article and the truth behind the image of "the new breed."

But the mass campaign for acceptance of "the new breed" has little to do with Women's Lib; it has much to do with economic necessity. Mothers are being left no choice but to seek employment, and if we must work, the our sanity demands that we seek something more worthwhile than "just a job." And to assuage the guilt we feel at leaving our children, we need the mass advertising to tell us it's acceptable to do so.

DEBORAH SEIFRIED JONES
St. Johns, Ari

Another reason English scholarship seems to be in a streak of wrong-headedness might be that the professors can't shake some of the habits left over from their days as graduate students ["Degenerate Criticism," by Peter Haw, October]. The chief requirement of any graduate-level English seminar is to produce lengthy papers on already overstudied topics about which no person with normally functioning appetites could work up much enthusiasm. Suppose that a student is asked to reduce, by next week, 3,000 words on characterization in *Hamlet*. This isn't exactly unplowed ground, and the student must reach a bit to come up with a fresh approach. Let's see, why not view the play as a profoundly feminist document with Gertrude and Ophelia as the central figures? Such a strategy is born of necessity and, at first, executed with tongue partly in cheek. But eventually the student can only conclude that the purpose of critical writing is obviously not to com-

municate. After all, anyone delivering these curious thoughts to a nonliterary audience would be pelted with last week's lettuce. But in the typical graduate English seminar, gibberish is routinely presented while the audience sits in rapt attention, brows furrowed and lips pursed.

I recall a professor in one of my graduate English seminars who undertook an explanation of why a symbolic interpretation of a particular poem had it all over a more literal reading. His left hand waist high, he said that the latter interpretation was a solid contribution and worthy of an underclassman's notice. Then the right hand came up to eye level, wrist cocked 90°. "But the symbolic reading is on a higher plane." A more intense look came in the eye, and the right hand wagged slightly. "A higher plane."

The problem with English studies, I think, is that a student who can be persuaded to clamber up to that higher plane is probably unable to step down from it.

KEVIN MARTON
South Windsor, Conn.

I always thought I had a pretty good sense of humor, but if Matthew Stevenson intended his "Survivors Club" [October] to be humorous, he failed.

Moreover, it contains a number of errors, not the least of which is the way I was quoted out of context. In an interview with the *Washington Post*, I said, "I think it would be very nice for the United States if all the countries of the world would be democratic." But as the *Post* went on to report, and Mr. Stevenson did not, I also said, "I think the Soviet Union thinks they have a good system, more recently thought up, and they would like to get a lot of people to go in that direction. I don't want to equate the way we and the Soviets reach those goals. They're totally dissimilar."

Finally, all of IBM's business in the Soviet Union, which by the way is less than one-tenth of one percent of total turnover, is conducted in strict compliance with U.S. law, and every computer the company has shipped there

WALLY HARPER'S



LETTERS

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Speaking generally, it seems to me that Mr. Stevenson is rather disenchanted with anyone who is willing to leave his normal line of business, or in my case, retirement, and do his best to serve his country.

THOMAS J. WATSON, JR.
Armonk, N.Y.

MATTHEW STEVENSON REPLIES:

I wonder how long the United States can afford to treat foreign policy as though it were an amateur sport, like golf or polo, played only by gentlemen of affluence or leisure. Over and over the country entrusts men of little diplomatic experience to positions—such as Ambassador to Moscow—that one would think might be beyond the on-the-job-training category.

Mr. Watson's qualification for the post in Moscow is neither his fluency in Russian nor his subtle understanding of the Soviet nationality problem, but tacit understanding in both the Soviet and American clubs keen on foreign policy that he will not threaten the existing order. This is a sharp contrast to his predecessor in the Soviet Union, Malcolm Toon, who was eased from office for taking seriously the Carter homilies on human rights.

If there is any comfort in the Watson appointment, it is that the position of Ambassador to the Soviet Union, as elsewhere, has been reduced to that of booking agent for the Secretary of State's road show. This devaluation has happened because most U.S. ministers abroad lack the political independence at home of a Jefferson or a Harriman as well as intimate knowledge of the country in which they are serving—a condition, judging from the quotes in the contextual discussion, about to be repeated in Moscow.

The politics of drilling

Jude Wanniski's "Oil in Abundance" [October] makes a very effective case for an accelerated, worldwide search for petroleum. Mr. Wanniski is misinformed, however, if he believes that oil companies with large coal reserves support President Carter's synthetic-fuels program because they want to "peddle" their coal to the government or get "government contracts to build

synthetic fuel plants." To the best of my knowledge, major oil companies do not support Mr. Carter's proposal to finance the building of synthetic fuel plants with revenues from a federal excise tax on domestic crude oil.

Certainly Conoco does not support the President's program—even though we may have the largest coal reserves of any private company in the United States. We would prefer to see synthetic fuels from coal, shale, and other sources developed by private companies, with appropriate financial incentives to get projects underway.

EDWARD J. MULLIGAN
Vice-President Public Relations
Conoco, Inc.
Stamford, Conn.

Mr. Wanniski's essay has all the force of an argument based on statistics but also its weakness. I agree that this planet has not yielded all of its treasures and that much petroleum remains to be discovered. The potential reserves of China, for example, are estimated, rather precariously, at 100 billion barrels. China is currently producing 100 million tons annually and expects to reach 400 million by 1988, a highly unlikely prospect.

But the present energy situation does not involve merely the problem of supply and demand, nor is it solely an economic or environmental issue. It is a political problem of worldwide dimensions. Mr. Wanniski admits as much and defeats his own argument with these words from his own article:

EDITOR'S NOTE:

"The Snows of Studio City," by George Plimpton (November), was adapted from an article included in *The '80s: A Look Back at the Tumultuous Decade 1980-1989*, edited by Tony Hendra, Christopher Cerf, and Peter Elbling, and published by Workman Publishing Company in October.

ERRATUM:

The line "shelling peas when they heard the noise," which followed the first line of the fifth stanza, was inadvertently dropped from David Budbill's poem "Raymond and Anne" (October). We apologize to Mr. Budbill and our readers for the error.

"Enormous amounts of conventional oil are waiting to be discovered, and will be once governments around the world—including the United States—are prepared to match the high risk of exploration with commensurate rewards." When will this miracle occur or this super-Utopia arrive? Granted the technology exists, but when will the risk-rewards concept be accepted "around the world"? The political reaction after World War I and again after World War II was toward centralized, controlled autocracies. The only democratic state to emerge in either war was Czechoslovakia and was suppressed first by Hitler and then by Stalin without our intervention. Yugoslavia is being communized and centralized despite our intervention. To the regiments of Cubans are establishing Moscow satellites on the African Horn. The energy policies of such areas—where there are others—are not likely to contrast sharply with their political doctrine. In terms of energy therefore, we are sliding out of the Cold War into a state of siege.

Mr. Wanniski is correct in saying that we should follow an autocratic path, but for a period of unpredictable length we should provide ourselves with a *contingent* energy supply. It is only on such a basis that the creation of a synthetic-fuels industry in the country can be justified. The Germans (even before Hitler) began constructing synthetic-fuels plants after World War I in the same single-minded way that the French began building nuclear power plants after World War II. They did so because they were short of oil. The lesson should be plain.

JOHN WORT
Fredericksburg, Va.

Split atoms, not wood

Stan Hager's "In the Logging Woods" [October] should be required reading for participants in the debate over "hard" and "soft" energy paths. The number of people killed and injured harvesting the 5 to 10 million tons of wood needed to provide the energy equivalent of a large nuclear coal-fired plant will make these "hard" energy sources appear benign. If the wood is to be used and collected in a noncentralized fashion, the costs will be even higher as inexperienced, paid

me loggers head for the woods with
eir double-bit axes and chain saws.

JEREMY M. HELLMAN
Monroeville, Pa.

Prudence or providence

Howard Morland writes quite lucidly out "The Meltdown That Didn't appen" at Harrisburg (October). owever, in describing the real acci- nt, Mr. Morland indulged in several the irrationalities *Harper's* claims guard against. Engineering judg- ent appears to have played a role far rger than Providence in reducing the nsequences of this accident. A three- id-a-half-foot containment wall is not andard design practice in the Soviet nion, nor is it featured in several ncommercial U.S. reactors. Yet the sign of the Harrisburg facility was rong enough to withstand a hydrogen pllosion.

Reference is made to the reactor run- ng out of control. How was control established? By accident, perhaps, or as the reactor out of control in the rst place?

R. J. BENERON
East Granby, Conn.

OWARD MORLAND REPLIES:

Early reactors had no containment cility at all, and each successive de- gn modification appears to satisfy blic pressure, not engineering prudence. The fuel is still hot at Three ile Island; water continues to leak mewhere from the core; the engi- ers would probably like to dump it t the Susquehanna River. As the re- tor building slowly fills with con- minated water, I don't think anyone in say even now that control has been establishe.

AWARDS:

Peter Meyer was selected as the first-place winner of the Univer- sity of Missouri Business Jour- nalism Award in the category of a general circulation magazine for his article "Land Rush" (Jan- uary).

Nancy Hallinan's "Women in a Roman Courtyard" (May) was selected as the Second Prize Win- ner for the 1980 edition of the O. Henry Prize Stories collection.

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1979



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NOW AND HEREAFTER

Catholicism fails the people of Ecuador

by Peter Marin

WHILE TRAVELING in Latin America two years ago, I met several members of the radical Catholic clergy. They were troubled and brave men and women struggling to reconcile their own moral concerns with the conservative and brutal role traditionally played by the church in Latin America. Siding openly with dissidents and rebels, they acted not only in defiance of the state, but also in opposition to higher church authorities, thereby taking risks in both the secular and the spiritual realms. Lately I find them much on my mind. One reason for that, of course, is the pope's visit to Mexico last January, with his ambiguous pronouncements about social justice and change, and his encyclical on "the person," in which he warns against political activity and radical ideology.

But there is also another reason that I have been thinking about my Latin American friends. We seem to be seeing in our own country what one might call a shrinking of the secular world: erosions in the secularity of social thought, a tendency to recombine religious values with political concerns, and a yearning to seek in transcendental values the certainty otherwise missing from political life. These shifts presage a struggle to define not only what we owe one another but also where the ground of such debts can be said to lie: in reason, conscience, enlightened self-interest, or transcendental values mediated by authority.

In Latin America, one can see at first hand the tension between secular and spiritual values, and the anguish of those who genuinely try to reconcile them. It is not an easy task. In many places the role of the church in Latin America remains what it was during the Holocaust—silence or empty and ambiguous exhortations to virtue. Where the official church does take a clear stand against the state, it often does so only *after* the state has turned on the church. For the most part, still, radical clergymen are few in number and scattered across the continent, often isolated in their own precincts, agonizingly alone in relation to the state, their own church, and the power of local authorities.

I KEEP THINKING, in particular, of two Maryknoll sisters I met in Ecuador while investigating the murder of a local peasant. Other Latin American countries have far more oppressive governments than Ecuador. But even there, church and state conflict in ways that illuminate the political anxieties of Catholic missions throughout Latin America.

The sisters were in their late thirties. Marta, the more politically militant of the two, had been raised in Ecuador; Anna was from Connecticut. They had come to Ecuador from Panama, where the priest with whom they were working as organizers was killed by the authorities. In Ecuador they

Peter Marin, a poet and novelist, is currently working on two books about politics and conscience.

had affiliated themselves with a large left-wing union trying to extend its activities into the countryside. Dressed in ordinary clothes, they worked with several groups of peasants, none of whom knew that they were nuns.

The murdered man had been one of a group of *campesinos* who had occupied a parcel of uncultivated land in the hope of gaining permanent title to it. The *campesinos* are not Indians but blacks, the descendants of Caribbean slaves originally brought into the valley by Jesuit priests who were engaged in the rum and slave trade. The blacks subsist on the same meager diets as their Indian counterparts but they are much healthier, cheerier, and longer-lived—in part, it is said, because the Jesuit masters bred their ancestors like animals, castrating but the hardiest males.

Their original village was situated on the banks of a river where one finds most of the arable land in the district. On plots no larger than a acre, each *campesino* lucky enough to have land raised enough food for his family, with a bit left over to sell. But the Pan-American Highway also runs through the valley, crossing the river a few miles upstream. Each year, in the spring, the river would flood, washing out the bridge and stalling traffic. The year before, the government had sent out engineers from the capital to change the river's flood channels, thereby protecting the bridge. As a result, when the river next flooded, the village fields were washed away, ruining the crops.



This Christmas, give your friends the "joy of being out of step," month after month.

It's said that Albert Einstein was unable to talk—or read—at the usual age.

Is it possible that Einstein was simply too "polite" to do so?

Who cannot remember, as a child, certain faint pressures to *masquerade* as a child?

Who can forget the high school teacher who spotted you for what you were: an overly polite but emerging non-conformist?

If you were the first person in the world to advance the unwelcome notion that the earth was not flat, exactly how long would you have held out?

The really odious thing about thought control is that it stifles not only the innovator but also the innovator's audience. Einstein (and his audience) were treated to indifference, persecution, scorn and consuming flattery.

The reason I am bringing all this up is not to commiserate over the well-known resistance to fresh thinking, but to invite you, and your friends, to personally be present at the time such thinking is first made public.

I am convinced that as a reader of this magazine, you have an interest in fresh, often unpopular, sometimes painful points of view; and I also believe you have the stomach for it.

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• Harper's Magazine, 1979

Encouraged by the sisters, the *campesinos* took advantage of Ecuador's land-reform laws by laying claim to some land about twenty miles from their village: 200 acres of a 5,000-acre hacienda that had lain uncultivated for decades. But the land-reform laws in Ecuador, as in other Latin American countries, are half-hearted measures at best, so complex and difficult that little land ever changes hands. In the valley, the *campesinos* could claim the land only if, at the same time, they could physically occupy it until a court in Quito reached a decision. The landowner, using men and arms, was doing his best to drive them from it.

The *campesinos*, who had no weapons with which to defend their claim, settled on the land and put up makeshift huts. They tried to earn some money by gathering brush to sell as firewood. But local authorities blocked the one road leading in and out of the land, and whenever a truck came through, its load was confiscated. When that failed to discourage the peasants, two dozen policemen showed up one afternoon and set fire to the huts, threatening to return. When the peasants rebuilt the huts and the police came again, the men scattered, hoping to avoid a direct confrontation. But the women and children were left behind, and after burning the huts the police began to pursue them. The men broke from cover; the police opened fire; one man was killed—Marquedo Leon, a farmer, twenty years old, about to be married. His body was hauled off by the police and would no doubt have vanished had the sisters not intervened to retrieve it. Later, the governor of the province sent for Marquedo Leon's mother. He offered her 500 pesetas, or \$40, as compensation for her son, hoping to put an end to the matter. She answered with contempt: "I did not raise a son to buy and sell him like a pig."

Two weeks after the killing, the sisters took me out to the land to meet the *campesinos*. Some had fled, but the bravest had remained, along with the poorest, who had nowhere else to go. We followed a dusty road across open and fallow land, then wound between steep hills until we came to an isolated plateau bounded by mountains on one side and a narrow, fast-moving river on the other. The pla-

teau was so desolate and dry that the earth itself seemed to be trying to drive the peasants from its surface. The reconstructed huts were arranged in an uneven circle, at the center of which a tattered volleyball net hung from two crude stakes. Deflated and useless, a ball lay in the dust off to one side.

That night there was a meeting. The peasants were frightened, expecting the police to return at any time. But if they fled, they would lose all claim to the land. And, to complicate matters, the previous day a visitor had arrived and had taken aside a few of the less-militant peasants. He made them an offer: If they would agree to vacate the land, abandoning their comrades, the landlord would make a separate arrangement with them, allowing them the land on "good terms," and even throwing into the bargain an expensive pump that would enable them to bring water from the river to irrigate the fields.

For hours the *campesinos* discussed what to do. Their voices, as I listened, were surprisingly gentle and eloquent, almost musical. It was clear that it was the peasants themselves, and not the sisters, who marshaled the best arguments for staying. By the end of the meeting a plan was decided on: the *campesinos* would stay on the land until the court case was finished; the next day a delegation would go into town to ask the missing comrades to come back to the land.

The precise role the sisters did play was difficult to determine. To the peasants, who did not know they were nuns, they represented the outside world and a necessary, sophisticated wisdom. They were connected with the union, had access to the courts, understood the complexities of the law. And, because they were white and middle-class, they would be treated far more respectfully by the government than would the peasants, and were therefore of immense use. But there was more to it than that. The peasants talked to them with great affection. "*Companaritas*," they would say, beginning their arguments—"little comrades"—looking to them for agreement, validation, or advice.

I remember in particular what one woman said to the sisters: "If only, my little comrades, we had guns. We would not be so afraid. As it is, how can we stay?"

SITUATIONS LIKE THIS confront members of the clergy day after day. They are forced to recognize facts that we still do not acknowledge in the United States: that hunger in Latin America has little to do with overpopulation, poor soil, or technological underdevelopment, though these are real and pressing troubles. But the most important issue in the countryside is *land*: who owns it and how it is used. As many observers have pointed out (most convincingly among them Geoffrey Barnclough, Joseph Collins, and Franco Lappé), at present there is enough land in every Latin American country to feed the entire population for some time to come; if it is fully used and planted with necessary foodstuffs rather than export crops.

I asked a man who had helped develop Ecuador's land-reform program how many people the river valley could support. Farmed in a Chinese fashion, he answered, with hand labor, terracing, and irrigation, it could maintain four times its present population at ten times their standard of living. But as things stand, this is impossible. The man who gave me the estimate had quit his post in disgust because no one in power in Ecuador wanted the land to be used in this way.

Is it any surprise that men and women awakened to these facts move toward what the pope calls ideology? Where evil inheres not only in individuals and individual acts, but in systems of distribution and the structure of society, it is inevitable that the spiritual life, as it takes a moral form, evolves into a demand for restructuring the economy and society. It is impossible to consider such questions without ideology, which is, in the simplest sense, a way of interpreting the past, understanding the present, and envisioning the future. And yet most of what one hears about ideology in Latin America—especially in relation to the clergy—is nonsense. Politics thought there is fragmentary and hazy. For the most part, what Marxism offers to Latin Americans is simply a language and perspective that their own heritage does not supply. One rarely finds the doctrinaire rigidity in Latin America that is present, say, in Eastern Europe or parts of the Far East. In general, a broken relation to the past, huge economic pro-



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VOLKSWAGEN DOES IT AGAIN



lems, immensely varying populations, and differing national histories and circumstances make any single solution or "line" impossible. And all of these conflicts are compounded for the radical clergy by the need to reconcile all social action and change with the gospels—by no means a simple task. Even the major texts of the "theology of liberation," so justly celebrated for certain sentiments, seem tortured and unconvincing—as if both a life in history and spiritual certainty are perhaps too much for anyone to expect.

I remember a visit I made in Riobamba to Bishop Proano, the most radical high-ranking clergyman in Ecuador. Here, too, a murder had been committed. But that was not the sole reason for my visit. A few weeks before, the bishop had hosted a meeting of two dozen radical clergymen from all over the continent. One of the items purported to be on the agenda was a secret report prepared by Vice-President Rockefeller for Richard Nixon, outlining ways in which the United States could splinter and repress church activism. But the meeting never got off the ground. Ecuadorian soldiers appeared on the first day, confiscating all documents, detained the clergymen overnight, and then shipped them back to their own countries.

When I arrived in Riobamba there were more soldiers and police on the street than I had seen elsewhere. Two men in civilian clothes outside the curia kept track of the visitors. The curia itself is a large, drafty building with worn wooden floors and peeling plaster walls. It was crowded that day with Indians who had come for the bishop's biweekly interviews in the hope of getting help. On wooden benches lining the corridors they waited with stoic faces, traditional felt hats on their heads, ragged packages in their arms, and dressed in their best clothes: worn shoes without socks, stained and baggy pants, frayed collars, thin ties showing above their woven shawls. One peasant, shrunken and misshapen, sat holding in his lap an old man even thinner and smaller, whose fists were clenched, eyes tightly shut, face screwed up in concentration, pain, or prayer. In a small room several books were for sale: Kropotkin's *Conquest of Bread*, pamphlets by Lenin and Marx, texts on the theology of liberation, and a work by the bishop

himself: *Conscientization y Evangelización Política*.

THE BISHOP is by no means what I would call a radical, though his superiors in the church consider him one. We were told that he had been summoned to Rome to undergo examination about his views and actions, but that after polling his parishioners for advice he had refused to go. In his office, a large and sparsely furnished room, he seemed frail and tired, almost overwhelmed by his tasks. When I asked him about the murdered campesino, he spoke without hesitation, but slowly, as if reciting a story he had told too many times before.

Here, too, several farmers had occupied some land, though in this case they were tenant farmers with rights to a share in the harvest—rights that the landowners resisted. Several priests, members of a group called Equipe Pastoral, came to the farmers' aid, and when harvest time arrived they allowed the farmers to quarter themselves in the local church. On the second day of the harvest two dozen men from the National Guard, accompanied by local police, broke down the door to the church, pushed aside the priests, and attacked the farmers with clubs and guns, killing one man. "He had bullet wounds in various parts of his body," the bishop said. "His skull was smashed in as well. He was buried in the cemetery at Uruapa."

As the bishop spoke, he used the phrase *realidad concreto* again and again. "Concrete reality": it is a phrase one often hears from clergymen in Latin America, and it refers to the vivid facts of abused power, violent deaths, and the incessant brutality that follows the peasants' assertion of even minimal rights. The church, in reality, has not changed from *within*. It has been forced to its new positions, or perhaps *led* there, by more secular and courageous, though less-educated, people: those whose deaths are a kind of worldly testimony—or perhaps *sacrifice* is a better word—through which the church faithful learn lessons their own creed and teachers fail to provide.

I ask the bishop where he finds a hope for the future.

"Humanly speaking," he says, "there seems to be little hope. But as

Christians we genuinely believe in salvation through Christ. If the farmer keep their Christian faith they will organize themselves in a Christian, communal way. They will see a bit of God's kingdom here on earth in the little they do. I cannot think in military blows or bloody revolutions, but rather in the invisible workings of the masses."

But does he not, I ask, sometimes feel trapped within the church itself?

"No," he says. "I feel free and nevertheless within the bosom of the church. I think and act as a Christian. Some priests have left the priesthood with the illusion of working outside. I feel they are in error. I do not feel trapped by anything. I live with the diversity of my ministry. I never think what I might have done."

It is impossible not to respect the bishop as a man or fail to be moved by his faith. One thinks, as one listens, of Tolstoy's austere Christianity in which doctrine, hierarchy, Christ and perhaps even God are left behind in the name of a humble pacifism in which all people are regarded as brothers and sisters, ends in themselves, and a source of binding truth.

But is this close to what the bishop has in mind? I ask him what kind of future he envisions for Ecuador.

"A Christian nation," he says. "One that is fully organized around Christian virtues."

I know what he means, I suppose. But a phrase like that, as natural as may seem to the bishop, summons for some of us images of Auschwitz and the southern Klan, as well as of New Jerusalem.

I tell the bishop I was raised as Jew. "Do you really believe," I ask, "that Christ's words are the sole source of truth?"

He smiles. "I see what you mean. I have many friends who aren't Christian. Some are Jewish. They, too, live in their way in accord with Christ."

"But is that the sole measure of goodness?" I persist. "Is virtue measurable only by Christ?"

"That," says the bishop, smiling, "is a difficult question."

One hears still, even in this bishop's words, the evangelical dream of Christ's worldly triumph. Perhaps there is nothing wrong with the dream as a religious idea, but it is hardly democratic as a political one. What becomes of Indian values or Gods, the

nothing of the Jews"? This is, in all, the same exclusionary doctrine that fosters not only the bishop's only life, but also the indifference to arrogance with which Christians have traditionally treated those unlike themselves, including the indigenous populations they now propose to help.

DO NOT SPELL this out to diminish the role of the church in Latin America. The tactics that bring about change there will be similar: general strikes, united fronts, mass-rooted movements, student rebellions, armed revolution, and even terrorism. But the church will play a part in the reforms, helping to organize the or as it now does in the *Comunidades de Base*, and in convincing people that they have a right to rebel. Yet acial as that is, perhaps the real significance of the changes in the church is elsewhere: in the elusive and abstract realm of values, where people see the sisters and the bishop try to make sense of the conflicting claims of dogma, God, secular justice, and the needs of others.

I remember one evening I spent with the sisters, when we sat talking at midnight about their lives. Maria, the more militant of the two, was concerned mainly about practical matters and her mistakes as an organizer. Anna was less certain and didactic and seemed to have more of a grasp of the ethical complexities of the matter.

"I don't know," she said, "whether or not this is worth it. A man died because of us. I can't forget it. We don't anticipate that. And for what? We don't even know if they'll get the aid. And if they do, what then? They have no money, no way to get water. I'd have them sit, safe, while they're waiting to be killed. It's not that the church has always done. We aid, they follow. What gives us the right?"

"But they knew," I said, "that there might be trouble, didn't they?" "Of course," she said. "But not that. They didn't know about that." "And if they'd known," I asked, "would they have gone ahead?"

"Maybe," she said. "They had no other choice."

"And they stay even now," I pursued, "even knowing that they may be?"

"I suppose so," she conceded. "But would they be there without us? And do we know what we're doing? They are so defenseless! Do you think it's right?"

Here, where the consequences of action become clear, doubt must assert itself—as a sign that conscience is still alive. Dogmatism gives way to something more essential: the consciousness of fallibility that ought to mark all political life. The sisters seem to me in some way as vulnerable and unprotected as the *campesinos* on the land. They have entered a complex no-man's-land of competing values, in which they stand simultaneously near the furthest edge of conscience and at the heart of moral life. True, doubt has become almost all. But if faith has been lost, something equally significant takes its place: a sense of what it means not to be saved, but to be fully human. Put the sisters' troubled concern side by side with the harsh certainty of American right-to-lifers and their disregard for the tragic ambiguities of conflicting truths and responsibilities. Or, for that matter, set next to the sisters the equally smug certainties of the secular pro-abortionists, convinced beyond doubt that the truth is entirely theirs. What is missing in both cases is the notion that one may be wrong, that one's truth is only partial, and that it must be judged by how it affects others—one's antagonists as well as one's friends.

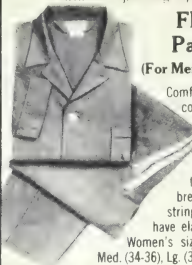
No doubt by most standards the bishop is closer than the sisters to Christian truth. But they seem to me nonetheless to have come a bit closer to the heart of moral life, and to the quandaries that ought to confront most thinking men and women whether they are religious or not. The source of the sisters' truth is to be found neither in revelation nor ideology, but in the privacy of conscience and in the needs of others whose truths they perceive as equal to their own in importance. They remind us of what we tend to forget in America: that it is where absolute belief ceases, dogma fades, and doubt begins—precisely where the pope warns the faithful to stop—that a true community of equals comes alive. It is there that moral value takes on its richest meanings: the word made flesh, as Christians like to say. □

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TOO FEW GOOD MEN

The volunteer (mercenary) army

by Seth Cropsy

LAST NOVEMBER, the Joint Chiefs of Staff publicly expressed their doubts about the ability of the All-Volunteer Force to supply enough men for a war. Gen. David Jones, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, suggested not a return to the draft but a revival of the registration system so that men could be drafted if needed in a crisis. The debate continues. It has revolved about two questions: whether the volunteer army, begun in 1973, has worked, and, if not, then whether a draft is the best way to fill our military needs.

The volunteer army was a calculated response to the draft's unpopularity at the end of the Vietnam war, and in an ironic sense it has worked. No one today is being drafted and no one is complaining. The standard for an army, however, is presumably not whether society is soothed by its composition, but how well it can defend the nation. The immediate, practical question ought to be just that—does the All-Volunteer Force meet the country's present defense requirements, and will it be able to do so in the future? The answer is no.

The evidence in support of this is demographic. Since the All-Volunteer Force began, the number of men in the prime recruiting group, aged eighteen to twenty-four, has risen steadily. During that same period, active-duty

strength dropped to its current level of 2.05 million—roughly 20 percent short of the 2.5-million level envisioned by the 1970 report of the President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Force. To avoid embarrassment over the military's failure to attract enlistments, the Pentagon has simply lowered yearly goals. This maneuver is also desirable because it produces instant budget reductions instead of the savings from elimination of weapons or bases, whose defenders are Congressmen ever-conscious of reelection. The point is that while in recent years troop strength fell as the group of right-aged men expanded, that pool of potential soldiers will begin shrinking by 1981. According to census predictions, it should drop some 20 percent by the mid-1990s, thus leaving the country with several choices.

The first is to permit active-duty strength to continue its decline, which will surely accelerate as the population of the eighteen-to-twenty-four age group decreases. Such a policy would be disastrous. Inferiority of conventional forces in a European crisis might encourage capitulation or, as a last resort, the use of nuclear weapons. There is no longer time, once a European war has begun, to draft, train, and send men to fight. So far, no one has seriously proposed allowing force levels to contract with the population. That leaves several

choices: either a return to the draft, some kind of national service obligation, or a change of incentives to attract more recruits. It would be while, however, before a change of incentives could ease the army's immediate manpower problem—a severe shortage of soldiers in the reserves.

WHEN THE VIETNAM war ended, and the draft ended, the reserve duty lost its appeal. The Army Reserve and National Guard need 150,000 men. The Individual Ready Reserve is the immediate source of replacement for combat losses, is 500,000 below normal strength. Armies cannot go on fighting with original front-line troops. As weapons become more terrible, troop replacements are indispensable.

The growing number of American military dependents in Europe is an additional threat to fighting capability. When the military switched from drafting men for two years of active duty to offering volunteers competitive pay and three-year enlistment with career inducements, it also offered stability, which allowed volunteers to marry and start families. There are now 293,000 military dependents in Europe, most of whom live in Germany—the likely starting place of any large-scale conventional war. The necessity of evacuating dependents might hinder the army's resistance to sudden attack, and the possibility that evacuation could be accomplished in a week is remote. A single week, however, is often mentioned as the span of time within which the Soviet military expects to reach northern France. Plans are in place, but highly mobile armies armed with devastating weapons would make the

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decisive period of action in a European war short indeed. If, rather than attacking suddenly, the Soviets chose to threaten or prepare an assault by increasing supplies and troops at forward positions, the presence of American military dependents would complicate the strategic and military response. Withdrawing dependents might appear as a prelude to war and hence invite attack. Allowing families to remain would expose them to danger and preclude effective resistance to the actual attack.

THE VOLUNTEER ARMY's inability to find enough recruits, its shortage of reserves, and its excess of dependents all evolve from the switch to a paid volunteer force. Its other shortcomings have less direct impact on combat preparedness, although they are considerable and point to the fact that the military, particularly the army, is less and less representative of the society it is charged to defend. Education levels and racial composition show the white middle class increasingly reluctant to bear arms.

Among military branches the army was the draft's neediest beneficiary. Its proportion of enlistments with high-school diplomas has declined since the pre-Vietnam period, while the percentage of male high-school graduates in the general population has increased. During the volunteer army's first four years, an average of slightly more than 40 percent of the army's male entrants did not have high-school diplomas, while that figure stood at 23 percent for the nineteen-to-twenty age group nationwide in 1977. Army figures for male entrants with some college education show greater disparities. Before the Vietnam buildup, roughly 15 percent of draftees and enlistees had attended college. The volunteer army has been getting about 5 percent.

Blacks and Hispanics join the army at more than twice their level in the overall population. Their current representation among army enlistments is about 40 percent. What the statistics show is that minorities, the poor, and the uneducated—mercenaries for the middle class—are serving in the volunteer army far in excess of their ratio to the national population. The Senate Committee on Armed Services

decided that in contrast to nationwide family incomes, "the Army and Marine Corps draw more heavily from lower-income groups."

All this has practical results. Many junior-level army officers believe that intelligence levels have slipped since the All-Volunteer Force began. It is a matter of concern because of the skills needed to use and service high-technology weapons. A more quantifiable index of trouble is the volunteer army's attrition rate. Unlike those who were drafted, one who now voluntarily joins the army may, if displeased, leave. At present, 40 percent of volunteers do not complete their first term of enlistment. These brief encounters are costly and quite contrary to expectations that the volunteer army would outperform the draft in providing a stable force. More important, the continual turnover is bad for the unity and spirit on which a good combat unit depends.*

Army figures show that a larger percentage of high-school graduates would cut attrition. Presumably, desertion rates, twice what the military experienced just before the Vietnam war, would also slacken if more enlisted men had the middle-class characteristics a high-school diploma represents. The All-Volunteer Force wants to recruit such people and more college graduates as well. Bigger salaries is a solution offered by members of the 1970 President's Commission on an All-Volunteer Force who have lately defended the present system. Milton Friedman, extending his free-market theories to war, thinks that the volunteer force works extremely well. William Meckling, former executive director of the President's Commission, believes the draft is a form of taxation that is unfair because it discriminates against the young. Both agree that insofar as problems exist in the volunteer army, they can and ought to be solved by economic adjustments. The notion of raising sala-

ries to bring in more and better soldiers deserves attention because it is certain to win support. The Let which would be pleased never to be released from the military again, will approve. So will those conservatives who think that if the marketplace can provide an army, it can also provide a good army—an opinion that ignores the broad effects of turning an army into a business.

Among its best soldiers this enterprise eliminates the idea of fulfilling one's duty or, as is more likely, the dedication to one's own unit—and replaces it with the striving for money or career advancement. Stirrings are mutterings about military unions a test to this. So does the managerial mentality's corrosive spread among officer ranks, a phenomenon the Richard Gabriel and Paul Savage describe in *Crisis in Command*.

The authors, both professors at Saint Anselm's College in New Hampshire, describe how the American military structure has changed since World War II and what that change has meant. They argue that when the Vietnam war accelerated in 1964, "traditional [military] ethics which buttressed the code of duty-honor-country had begun to weaken, and their place the military officer was expected to operate within a code of ethics drawn largely from the practices of the free enterprise marketplace." The new ethics naturally encouraged an officer to place his own career above other considerations. Officers went sent to Vietnam for six-month tours half the time enlisted men served, so that all of them might have a chance to experience war. Going into battle to experience it, however, is not the same as going to lead, and if the enlisted men did not understand the difference, they felt the effect. Combat-units spirit and cohesion suffered because of frequent changes in leadership. Officers whose career interests directed them to lead their troops from helicopters also undermined the morale of fighting units. Gabriel and Savage observe about management technique in the officer corps applied equally to the question of a paid army: Military service is essentially different from other occupations because soldiers are expected to "be faithful unto death"—an act for which no economist or managerial expert has yet devised financial or career incentives.

*England and Canada are the only other important nations with volunteer armed forces. The Soviets' military is drafted, and enlistees serve at least two to three years. Other Warsaw Pact countries maintain drafts in which recruits serve for from sixteen months to three years. France requires a one-year tour of duty; Italy, from one year to eighteen months. Other Western European nations vary from slightly less than one year to about three years.

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THE IMMEDIATE DIFFICULTY in attracting better enlistments at higher pay is at the core of military manpower today; ironically, it is not really something the military can control. The problem is how the rest of society regards the armed forces. When the Vietnam war ended, the traditional grudging acceptance of the military positively soured. It has neither recovered since nor shown any sign of doing so. As a result, the middle class, which wants not only well-paying careers but respected ones, has steered clear of the army.

It is simply unjust that the poor and minorities should assume an unequal share of defense burdens. But the nonrepresentation of basic civilian interests in a professional army is a greater source of potential trouble. When a state chooses to pay those who are less fortunate or foreigners for military responsibilities it no longer wishes to bear, there are domestic consequences. In Rome, the army became professional seventy years before Caesar's death, when Caius Marius offered pay for service in his expedition against the African King Jugurtha. Until Marius, bearing arms was a citizen's duty. After him, the armies were composed of professional soldiers owing allegiance not to Rome but to their generals, whose rivalry was pivotal in the republic's decline. Such a situation in this country is inconceivable. We are more disposed to reject military actions than to see them as a plain on which great men vie for honor. In the face, though, of such persistent rejection, an entirely professional army is far more likely to embrace hard-line political opinions than an army that consists of the population at large. When a society loses respect for the military it is reasonable to expect that the military will lose respect for society. At that point traditions of military deference to political authority are hollow, raising at least the possibility of a coup.

Current opinions about reinstating the draft range from confusion about the armed forces to abhorrence of them. The Secretary of the Army, Clifford Alexander, expresses the confusion. Replying to criticism that the army has a disproportionate number of blacks, Alexander observed last June that "the alarm is misdirected. The truly alarming fact is that unem-

ployment among black teenagers is running at 40 percent." The alarming fact, however, is that the Secretary of the Army is ignorant of his responsibilities. They do not include trying to increase employment among black teenagers, or white teenagers—or anybody. Neither do the army's Secretary Alexander should be occupied with preserving the army's ability to fight. It comes as less of a surprise that others in Washington look upon the army as an escape valve for social problems, and the point will be made explicitly if Congress seriously debates resuming the draft. The existence of this opinion proves that people have forgotten what an army is for.

A sample of the national press's opinion shows much less confusion. William Greider, former editor of the *Washington Post's* Sunday editorial section, wrote an attack on the draft and compulsory national service last February. "What," he asked, "does the government have in mind for our children? Do not give us the grand abstractions of Cold War ideology which satisfied most citizens in the past, the academic garble about 'global strength' and 'the balance of power' and all that." Greider claimed to see "the formative outlines of an obscene coalition between the liberal establishment and the right-wing militarists in order to sell jointly this terrible idea." A Gallup poll taken in the spring found an attitude among the citizenry somewhat short of coalition strength. After people were told that the armed forces have had trouble getting volunteers to meet manpower needs, the poll asked whether we should return to a draft. A fraction more than half of those questioned thought we should not. It is hard to overstate these answers. Half the nation, if the poll is accurate, believes a draft to be unnecessary even though the military is failing to meet its manpower requirements.

GIVEN THE POLITICAL CLIMATE these opinions reflect, the most one may expect is passage of legislation to require registration for those eighteen to twenty-six years old so that their names would be available in an emergency. This will not address the volunteer army's coming demographic problem, its shortage of reserves, or any

other difficulty. It will provide the Warsaw Pact with an uncommonly reliable gauge of American intention since it is unthinkable that the system would be used until we had to fight. By that point, to repeat, they wouldn't be any time to train soldiers for a large-scale, modern, conventional war. Registration's sole benefit is its chance to acquaint citizens with the idea that they have duties. Universal national service in one of its many forms now before Congressional committees might have the same result, although that is questionable. It is more likely to bring forth another great bureau, costing an estimated \$30 billion annually, and a lot of cynicism, because the government will then be actively condoning middle-class reluctance to serve under arms—predictable result of the choices errands would be asked to make.

A lottery draft, without exemptions is the fairest way to supply the armed forces with manpower needs unmet by normal recruitment. A draft would fill the reserve shortage, eliminate the inequalities of an unrepresentative military, and ensure the supply of men. The draft, however, presupposes a society that considers lying to avoid military obligation disgraceful. It presupposes a society that has both measure of respect for the military and some sense of obligation to the country. A lack of the first equals an unwillingness to defend oneself that characterizes people who do not believe in themselves. The idea that citizens have no obligations is hardly new in the United States, but it has reached a peak with the institutional sanction the All-Volunteer Force stands for.

Military service in a democracy is the obligation of a citizen, not because it may demand giving one's life, but because arms protect the state that is responsible for giving and ensuring rights. If not gratitude, at least the self-interested wish to maintain those rights should persuade people to serve. When there is absolutely no understanding of citizen duty, rights are literally taken for granted. One looks at the rest of the world ought to convince us that rights are tenuous indeed and that it is a mistake to take them for granted. The most telling sign of our resistance to the draft is that that is exactly what we are doing.

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GOING DOWN WITH GREAT BRITAIN

Thatcher against the inevitable

by Peter Jenkins

MARGARET THATCHER took time off to see *Evita*, the smash-hit musical that gives a glossy romantic version of the rise and fall of Eva Perón. If such treatment could be given to a woman of easy virtue and unprincipled ambition, what might the musical hagiographers one day make of Thatcher herself, a woman of principle? Her ambition is to save the nation, nothing less, and she is a lady who—in Joseph Schumpeter's splendid phrase—has seen "the glamour of fundamental truth."

Save Britain from what? From the thrall of socialism, from the dispiritment of persistent economic failure, from the beckonings of decline—these were the underlying themes of the election campaign that brought her to power on May 3. She made politicians' promises, to be sure, chiefly of sweeping tax cuts, but she was essentially a bad-news candidate. Since the election she and her ministers have gone on warning about decline. The other day her Chancellor of the Exchequer, Geoffrey Howe, described Britain's economic prospects as "almost frighteningly bad." This in itself is unusual, for governments don't usually go around poor-mouthing the performance of the economy. Moreover, during the thirty-four years since the ending of the war, for what seems like an age-long period of recurring economic crisis, the people have been led to believe that only some marginal improvement was required to crack the problem. In

a sense, of course, all problems are marginal, including the camel's problem with his back, but the result has been—or so it now seems to me—to nourish the delusion that Britain's postwar plight was no more than a temporary aberration from the glorious norm of its history.

The notion of decline, the idea that Britain might be experiencing something like what happened to Rome, Venice, Spain, and the Dutch Republic, was, until recently, taboo. For example, in 1973, Lord Rothschild, an eminent biologist from the great banking family who was, at that time, head of the

Peter Jenkins, a columnist for The Guardian of London, is writing a book on the past 100 years of British history.

government "think tank," was repudiated in public by then-Prime Minister Edward Heath for daring to suggest that if things went on the way they were, Britain by 1985 would find itself half as rich as Germany and France and about on par with Italy. He warned: "Unless we take a very strong pull at ourselves and give up the idea that we are one of the wealthiest, most influential, and important countries in the world—in other words that Queen Victoria is still reigning—we are likely to find ourselves in increasingly serious trouble."

He was right. Already the latest available score sheet looks like this:

Gross Domestic Product

	GDP AT		AVERAGE ANNUAL	
	1977	MAR-77	GDP PER	GDP
	KET PRICES		CAPITA	GROWTH
	(in U.S. billions)		1977	1972-77
			(in \$U.S.)	(%)
GERMANY	516.2	8,410	2.3	
FRANCE	380.7	7,170	3.3	
BRITAIN	244.3	4,370	1.8	
ITALY	196.1	3,470	3.0	

(SOURCE: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)



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Decline, however, is not simply a matter of arithmetic. That Britain has been doing worse than others is news. This kind of talk has been going on for more than a century with almost unflinching consistency of diagnosis. What is remarkable now is that

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advent of a government led by someone who is not content to worry away at the edges of the problem. Her night-mare vision is of relative decline becoming absolute, of Britain traipsing down the road of Eastern Europe, degenerating into a state of morbid collectivism—shoddy, shabby, and unfree. Margaret Thatcher came to power bent on counterrevolution.

ANTISOCIALIST ZEAL inspired her from the earliest days. At Oxford she read Friedrich Hayek, not Keynes, and heeded his now-again-fashionable warning that the statist path is *The Road to Serfdom*. Hayek believed, and still believes, that what he had seen happen in Weimar Germany could happen in Britain, namely that fascism was not merely a reaction to socialism but rather its natural consequence. She was moved also by Winston Churchill's spirited antisocialist crusadings, although, on returning to power in 1951, he was to govern in a quite different spirit of moderation and reconciliation.

The young Thatcher, unlike many of the leaders of her party at the time, was free of social guilt. She owned no lands or country mansions; she was born over a grocer's shop and won her way to the university with scholarships. She was too young to be troubled by the 1930s, when Conservative governments had presided over mass unemployment and widespread misery. Today as she sits in pride of place at the Cabinet table, beneath the portrait of Robert Walpole, Britain's first prime minister ("Peace abroad and prosperity at home"), she is surrounded by rich men, owning much land and educated at Eton and other such schools.

Nor is her style of conservatism at all in the mainstream of her party's traditions. It is much closer to the economic liberalism of Gladstone—who wanted money "to fructify in the pockets of the people"—than to the reforming paternalism of Disraeli. Her coming to power did not mean the Conservative party had been converted to nineteenth-century English liberalism or twentieth-century Chicago monetarism; rather it was due to brilliant opportunism on her part. Her party was determined to dump Edward Heath, and who replaced him mattered less. It woke up one morning to find itself

wedded to a woman leader who belonged to a faction of zealous ideologues that had grown up within the party. It was virtually a *coup d'état*.

What she had sensed, most accurately, was the disaffection of the liberal intelligentsia from social democracy. In 1964, as thirteen years of Conservative rule came to an end, the intelligentsia had rallied enthusiastically to the new-frontier spirit of Harold Wilson's Labour party. Another thirteen years later Keynes was being pronounced dead, indeed denounced by Margaret Thatcher's friends as the chief agent of "creeping socialism." It was in this changed intellectual climate, as the leader of what is still a minority faction within her party but as the triumphant victor of an election fought on an antisocialist platform, that she pledged herself to arrest and reverse the decline of Britain.

That decline can be dated from the 1860s. Of course, any preeminent industrial power will experience relative decline as other countries come up and expand their share of world markets. It has been happening to the United States. But Britain's relative decline developed a cumulative momentum over more than a century. In the late Victorian period there were already voices warning that unless Britain looked to its education system—already inferior to the Prussian, from which the United States was willing to learn—it risked falling behind in the application of the new technologies. By 1900 British productivity teams were visiting the United States in search of the elixir of American enterprise. Many were to follow in their footsteps. By 1900 the *Times* of London was running a series entitled "The Crisis of British Industry."

Most of the explanations that we hear today of Britain's falling behind could have been heard then. They included strategic overextension of empire; industrial complacency caused by captive colonial markets; retreat from industry into finance; waning of entrepreneurial enthusiasm in the second and third generations; too many small family firms; failure to establish a national educational system; a ruling class concerned more with administration than with trade; amateur and unscientific management; restrictive-minded and highly unionized labor; constricting class divisions; obsolete

plants owing to the early industrial start.

My own explanation leaves room for all these factors. At no time did Britain face a challenge of such seriousness that change became imperative. What should the late Victorians, for example, have troubled to put themselves in the forefront of the second industrial revolution when they were continuing to do handsomely out of the first? Between the wars the international economic order that Britain had tailored to its own needs collapsed; after the second war it was replaced by a new order made in the American image. The war had devastated Britain's assets overseas and destroyed the earnings that had masked the declining trade performance. Yet Britain emerged from that war ostensibly the victor, while Germany, the vanquished power, experienced what turned out to be the enormous advantage of having to make a fresh, modern start. Even today the providential boon of North Sea oil disguising what would otherwise already be a disastrous industrial performance. Life is not so bad in Britain and in most years it still goes on getting a little better. It is difficult to persuade people that by the 1990s, as the oil begins to run out, we might become unable to feed and clothe our people in the styles to which they have become accustomed. That is to say that relative decline could become absolute with who knows what political consequences. There has been no such modern case—of relegation from developed to underdeveloped status.

THE THATCHER GOVERNMENT came to power with a clear, simple, set of beliefs. Thatcher herself had shown Milton Friedman-like tendencies as early as 1968, although she was a member of the Edward Heath Cabinet through the great money-printing spree of 1972-73. Now she is determined to squeeze inflation from the system by monetary discipline in the Chicago manner. She was no less determined on California-style tax cuts, which, she hoped, would restore the spirit of enterprise to the people. Cuts in public spending programs would make room for the wealth-creating activities of the private sector. Meanwhile, deflation combined with some modest change

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in the law affecting trade unions, would redress the balance of power in industry.

That was the idea. She soon began to learn, however, that revolutions—and, still less, counterrevolutions—are not easily made at the margins. For example, it was discovered that drastic cuts in social spending were necessary merely to hold the level of public expenditure at around 42 percent of gross domestic product. That meant that in order to provide the promised incentives in the form of income tax cuts she had to hike the value-added tax (which falls on goods and services) from 8 to 15 percent. According to one calculation, 90 percent of the British people were made worse off by her first "enterprise budget."

This in turn meant that she would face formidable difficulties on the wage front as unions sought compensation for rising prices. According to the Chicago doctrine, the unions could not cause inflation, provided the government kept tight hold of the money-supply strings; all the unions could do was cause more unemployment. However, the logic of this reasoning avoided the question of whether trade unions and their members could or would behave with collective rationality or whether the strong among them would not be content enough to see the consequences of their bargaining visited upon the weak—in which instance it would be the government, not the unions, that would be blamed in the end as unemployment exceeded tolerable levels and as deflation took a rising toll of bankruptcies. Would she then keep her nerve—or would she U-turn?

It has to be remembered that the negative strength of British trade unions is immense. They are the most highly organized in the industrialized world, with a membership of 12 million, or nearly 50 percent of the registered labor force. Moreover, their crisscross, competitive structure makes them a particularly lethal force of negativism. I stress the negative character of their power because it is sometimes imagined that British trade unions are some kind of parallel government that virtually runs the country. It is not so at all; what they do, from time to time, is prevent the country from being effectively governed. This is because they are institutionally incapable of trad-

ing off either higher productivity for higher wages on the shop floor or wage restraint for more expansive economic policies.

As the trade unions have grown in unpopularity, so their memberships have grown. All kinds of unlikely groups, such as bank managers and top Whitehall civil servants, have been drawn by inflation, and by income policies agreed on between governments and the Trades Union Congress, into union membership. The corporatist spirit is strong; there has been a general proletarianization, and groups as eminent as that of surgeons speak the language of the working class and engage in "industrial action." A decade ago hospital strikes were virtually unthinkable.

As she peers ahead into the current bargaining round, Margaret Thatcher could be forgiven an occasional prayer that Friedman is right about unions not causing inflation. She ought to be praying, too, that her faith in incentives is soundly based. "What is the real driving force in society?" she asked, rhetorically, during one of her campaign speeches. "It is the desire for the individual to do the best for himself and his family. There is no substitute for this elemental human instinct." But modest tax changes are unlikely to alter cultural attitudes formed over many years, attitudes that are themselves a consequence, as well as a cause, of Britain's declining competitiveness. Moreover, the free-market philosophy from which the Thatcherites drew such inspiration in opposition has already, in office, run into the hard economic and social reality of allowing the shipbuilding industry to go under, of cutting off state funds from British Leyland, the nationalized automobile concern, and of withdrawing the largesse of the taxpayer from the blighted and jobless regions of the north of England, where the scars of that first industrial revolution are still hideous to behold. The new government has already looked these decisions in the eye, blinked, and recoiled.

IN BRITAIN TODAY there is a chorus of *bien pensant* opinion warning people that this is the last chance, the last stop on the decline-and-fall line; providentially, the oil under the sea has allowed us a few more years of

reprieve. But the people have heard this "last chance" stuff before. We are not quite at the point that the French Ambassador to Madrid, de Villars, described in 1680 when he wrote that although "the power and the policy of the Spaniards" had been "diminished constantly . . . since the beginning of the century," the change had "become so great in recent times that one can actually see it occurring from one year to the next." Spanish Main gold was the Castille what North Sea oil may prove for Britain—the agent of de-industrialization. But for the vast majority of the British the todays are a noticeable improvement on the yesterdays; it is not in the nature of a society to worry about the tomorrows, and who cares about the standard of living in Cologne? An ordinary Englishman reading the history of the past 100 years might well conclude it to be an encouraging chapter of false alarms.

As others ponder more deeply and ever more obsessively the causes of our national decline, it grows more striking that we lack a public philosophy capable either of inspiring success or of fully explaining the nature of our failure. Instead we have a belief only in our Britishness. At its best this is a justified pride in the long and unprecedented continuity of our political society: the strength and resilience of our institutions: the force of our rule of law; the generally high and uncorrupt standards of our public life; and the good manners and phlegm of our people. Decline is putting all of these attributes to a new test, but the British way of life is not dead yet.

At worst this Britishness is a form of ethnocentricity, similar to the belief of the late Chinese empire that it stood at the center of the world (maps were drawn to prove it), could demand tribute from the vassal Queen Victoria and could, if necessary, bring her to her knees by the sanction of a rhubarb embargo. It takes the form of an arrogant superiority ("The wogs begin at Calais"), a contemptuous defiance of history ("The sun will never set . . .") and a flimsy justification for a stubborn and inflexible pragmatism—the system we call "muddling through."

This inadequate substitute for a public philosophy allowed no settled place for business and attached no particular value to enterprise; it left unresolved the role of the state and the proper e-

tent of its activities; it was silent about how education should be organized on a national basis; it implicitly condoned a continuing and corrosive class war; it took for granted that politics were conducted on the Manichaean basis of our two-party system of government—that is, between two parties simultaneously drawn toward a collusive consensus in the center while wedded to obsolete and warring official ideologies. In other words, it was held to be virtually self-evident that in the rare instances that the British way was not the best, there were special reasons, British reasons, why the foreign way would not do. We became a nation impervious to failure.

Past good fortune is our present misfortune. We are twice the victims of our history, reaping today the harvests of past failures while still living in part off the fruits of past success. We are a ripe society, an aging society—a condition quite alien to the still-youthful spirit of the United States, although middle age may be creeping up there as the arteries of production harden. In Western Europe generally, the intellectual tide may be turning against the socialist idea. Yet there are no signs of the clock's being turned back to nineteenth-century free enterprise. Most other countries have settled into their modernity—their mixed welfare economies—while the United States alone is *sui generis*, bypassed by the age of social democracy.

The decline of Britain is not a moral question. Nor is it, as many Americans seem to think, a simple ideological question—soluble at a stroke in a *Wall Street Journal* editorial. One could squally write the history of British decline around the theme of inadequate exercise of state power. The Golden Age to which Margaret Thatcher harks back is not a recoverable norm, but rather a remarkable moment in which a host of exceptionally favorable factors conspired to make the British Isles, two small dots on the map, the "workshop of the world" and the hub of the greatest empire known to history. Her essay in the politics of nostalgia may turn out to be another chapter in the story of self-deluding British exceptionalism. A century of decline is the salient fact. I fear that the curtain has risen on yet another great era of hope. ☐

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1979

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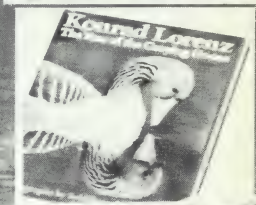
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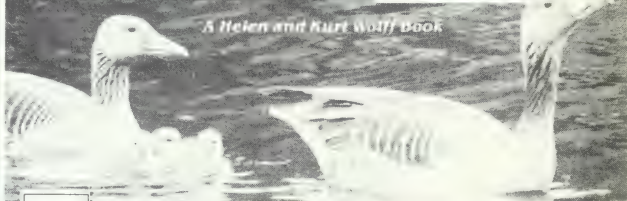
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and individuals pay to respond to regulation. For instance, the private sector fills out over 4,400 different federal forms each year.

The steel industry alone complies with some 5,600 regulations administered by 26 different federal agencies. General Motors spends more than \$1 billion per year—equal to 2% of its sales and one-third of its net profits—to comply with government regulations. And while big business gets hit hard, small business gets walloped.

Don't get us wrong. We're not against reasonable regulations, particularly those concerning safety, health and environmental protection. We, like most Americans, want cleaner air and water and safer working facilities.

But there's no justification for a price tag of \$100 billion for this purpose. Particularly not at a time when we are having difficulty effectively competing in

world markets and while our standard of living continues to be eroded by inflation.

Much of that \$100 billion could be better used for new business investment, for new products, for new research and development, for new plants and most important, for new jobs.

Positive uses of economic resources and material resources coupled with American productivity built this country and made our people prosperous. We need a return to these simple basics to compete in the future.

American productivity. Why put unreasonable hurdles in its way?



Jean Francois Revel on the
new American revolution

There are five revolutions that must take place either simultaneously or not at all: a political revolution; a social revolution; a technological and scientific revolution; a revolution in culture, values and standards; and a revolution in international and interracial relations. The United States is the only country, so far as I can see, where these five revolutions are simultaneously in progress and are organically linked in such a way as to constitute a single revolution. In all other countries, either all five revolutions are missing, which settles the problem, or one or two or three of them are lacking which relegates revolution to the level of wishful thinking.

From *WITHOUT MARX OR JESUS: The New American Revolution* by Jean Francois Revel. Copyright © 1971 by Doubleday & Company, Inc. Published by Doubleday & Company, Inc.



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Great Ideas: one of a series

EDWARD KENNEDY AND THE ROMANCE OF DEATH

The making of a minotaur

by Lewis H. Lapham

Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child.
—Ecclesiastes 10:16

BY CHOOSING TO CAMPAIGN for the Presidency next year, Sen. Edward Kennedy permits his fellow citizens to enjoy the guilty pleasure of guessing at his chance of being murdered. Prolonged over a period of months, the intoxicating horror of his calculation will impart to the election the excitement of a gladiatorial show in the Roman arena. No matter what issues the candidates discuss, whether they choose to talk about arms-limitation agreements or the care of the nation's children, the public mind will remain fixed on the promise of blood-stained spectacle. Every airport, every shopping center and hotel lobby, every banquet hall through which Senator Kennedy passes on his perilous journey will be suffused in the flat and lurid light of a prospective killing ground.

As recently as twenty years ago the American electorate was content with balloons and platitudes and silly hats. But the times have gone from bad to worse, and these innocent amusements no longer satisfy a people that feels itself baffled and betrayed. To the extent that the electorate deteriorates into a frightened mob, it grows restive and savage, demanding entertainments as deadly as its fears. The publishing and television syndicates distract the public mind with pornography and sado-

masochistic violence, and the managers of the national political circus, distributing their handbills to coincide with the advent of the Christmas season, announce the entrance into the amphitheater of a man recognized by the crowd as both victim and devourer of victims. The desire that such a man should campaign for the Presidency bears witness to the debasement of the republican idea of government. Senator Kennedy so obviously stands within the penumbra of death, a smiling and Dionysian figure playing out the last act of a fearful tragedy, that it is fair to ask why anyone would follow him across a street, much less elect him to an office charged with the duty of protecting the life of a nation. Is it the man or the name, and, if a name, then a name for what?

In the iconography of his person, Senator Kennedy embodies the whole of his family's history and character—its courage and licentiousness as well as the ruthlessness of its ambition, its corruption, laughter, greed, wealth, privilege, and cruelty. His place in the public imagination he owes to the death of three brothers, two of them assassinated. He can talk about the post office or the color of the rain, but even the whisper of his voice brings to mind not only the despairing alcoholism of his wife and the drowning of Mary Jo Kopechne, but also the suicide of Marilyn Monroe, the drug addiction of the nephews for whom he stands as surrogate father, his own

*Lewis H. Lapham is
the editor of Harper's.*

Lewis H.
Lapham
THE
ROMANCE
OF DEATH

father's thievery, and the rumors of sexual orgy that run like a soft counterpoint through the ballad of the Kennedys. The iconography has little or nothing to do with Senator Kennedy's own character or attainments. The armorers of the media force it over his head like a terrible helmet, both monstrous and beautiful. Senator Kennedy can do nothing to dislodge it. He inherits the reputation, the legend, and the iron mask of power.

Figures of inferior clay

AMONG THE OTHER candidates who so far have made themselves available to next year's election, only President Carter and Gov. John Connally provide comparable opportunities for the dream of omnipotence. Mr. Carter presents himself as the agent of a spiritual supremacy. Having been elected on a promise to redeem the country rather than to govern it, and having so manifestly failed in this mission to the heathen, Mr. Carter now wanders through the countryside in search of a convenient Golgotha. He struggles up and down the hills of Maryland, wearing his jogger's sweatband as if it were a crown of thorns, perhaps thinking that by the sacrifice of his own sublime and twice-born self he yet might rescue the nation from all the evils that have befallen it. Unfortunately for Mr. Carter, this approach to the business of redemption inspires as little enthusiasm among the electorate as did Christ's disappointing news that he had come riding into Jerusalem on the foal of an ass not with an army but with a host of words. Governor Connally at least appreciates the uses of war and shows a proper regard for the money changers in the temple. His wealth and cynicism provide a scaffolding for a public fantasy almost as grotesque as the one that supports the effigy of Senator Kennedy.

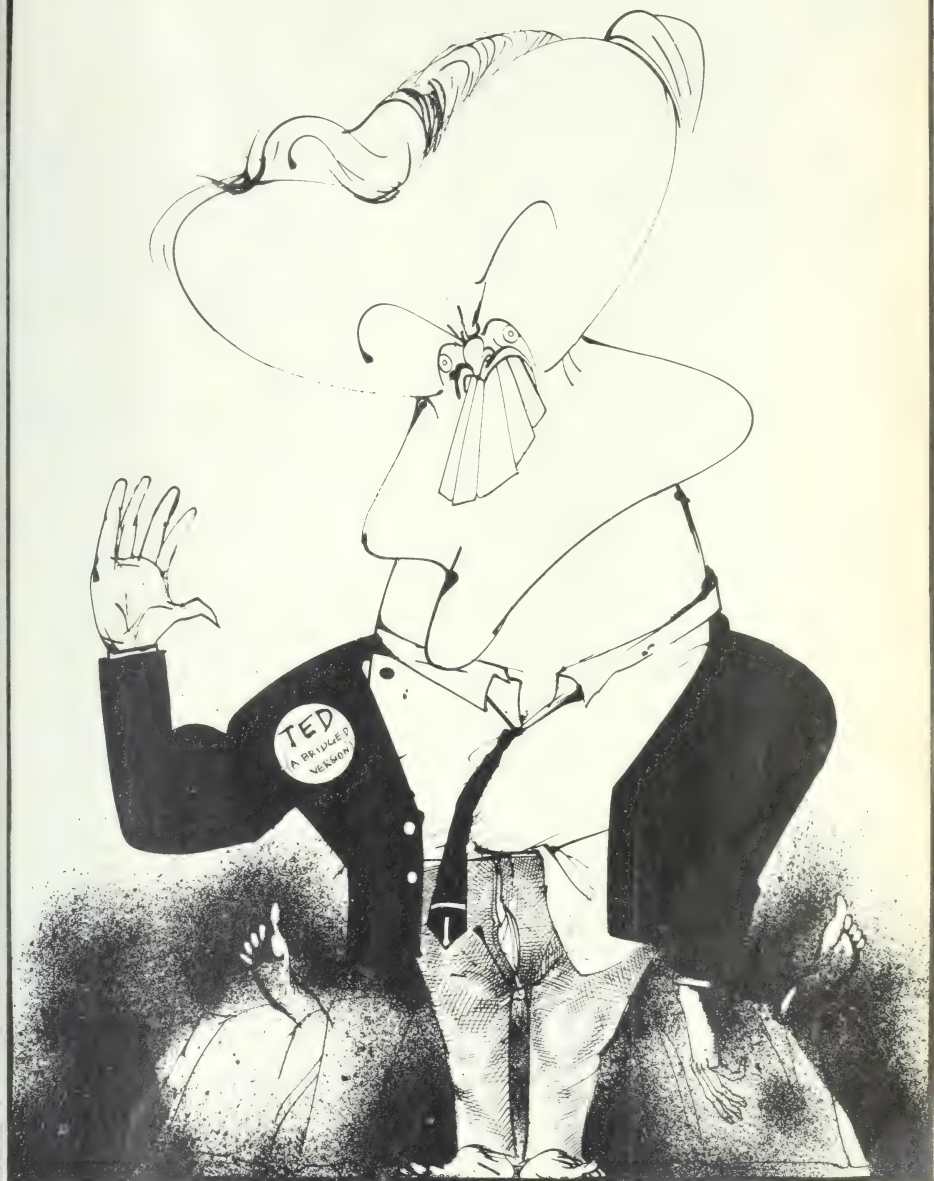
To the citizen consumed by envy (that most democratic of emotions), Governor Connally offers the inspirational example of an adventurer grown rich in the service of the law. The envious citizen can say to himself that if only he possessed Governor Connally's contempt for scruple, then he, too, could enjoy the freedoms granted by the Constitution. Governor Connally inherits his place in the public imagination through the line of criminal descent that begins with the fur traders of the early nineteenth century and then, by degrees of subtlety and refinement, extends itself forward in time through the robber barons, the Harding Administration, the Teapot Dome scandal, Al Capone and the Chicago syndicate,

Spiro Agnew, Richard Nixon, and George Steinbrenner. Although as equally uninterested as Senator Kennedy in the idea of republican government, Governor Connally cannot excite a crowd to the same fever of devotion. Perhaps this is because his crimes, whether real or imagined, tend toward a financial rather than a sexual expression. He lacks the Dionysian element, and this makes him less of a wanton child and more of an adult, ruthless enough and mean, but still too much associated with the tedious commercial realities of contracts, monetary rates, and bribes. Governor Connally has something about him of the romance of death, but for the most impersonal of reasons—because murder might be necessary to protect the money, not because of the pleasure of killing. By appealing to the basest motives of the American people, he grounds his campaign on the secure platform of fear and greed.

At this point in the campaign, none of the other candidates seems to be made of the kind of clay out of which it is possible to model figures hideous enough to divert the attention not only of the mob but also of the official and intellectual classes, who confuse the lost American Eden with the spaciousness of empire. The other candidates are too easily recognizable as mere men, and so they fail to satisfy the urgent desire to establish gods and heroes in place of magistrates. In his essay on repentance, Montaigne remarks on the folly of assigning too much value to the illusions of omnipotence, and I think the passage worth quoting at some length:

To storm a breach, conduct an embassy, govern a people, those are brilliant actions. To scold, laugh, sell, pay, love, hate, and deal gently and justly with one's family and oneself, not to relax or contradict oneself: that is something rarer, more difficult and less noticed by the world. . . . Private persons, says Aristotle, do virtue a higher and more difficult service than men in authority. We prepare to meet outstanding occasions rather for glory than for conscience' sake. The shortest way to gain a great name, however, would be to do for conscience' sake what we now do for glory. Alexander's virtue seems to me to show somewhat less strength on his great stage than that of Socrates in his humble and obscure activities. I can easily imagine Socrates in Alexander's place, but Alexander in that of Socrates, I cannot. If Alexander were asked what he could do, he would reply, "Conquer the world"; but if the same question were put to Socrates, his answer would be, "Lead a man's life according to its natural conditions," a much more general, more important, and more legitimate undertaking.

Geared Square



Lewis H.
Lapham

THE ROMANCE OF DEATH

... As those who judge and test our inner being attach no great importance to the brilliance of our public acts, and see that these are no more than jets and beads of clear water spurting from an otherwise thick and muddy bottom; so, under similar circumstances, those who judge us by our brave outward show come to a like conclusion about our inner character. They cannot reconcile common faculties, just like their own, with these other faculties, which astound them and are so far beyond their vision.

Therefore we endow demons with monstrous shapes. And who does not picture Tamerlane with arched brows, open nostrils, a grim visage, and a prodigious stature, in accordance with the picture that the imagination has conceived of him from the report of his fame? ... From such high thrones, it seems to us, men do not descend so low as to live.

A republican government assumes that it can get along without the services of Alexander or Tamerlane. It assumes further that things change and men fail not because they are evil but because they are men. The attitude of mind requires the courage to admit that the future will not resemble the past and that the principle of uncertainty, as variously defined by Darwin, Freud, Jefferson, Einstein, and Heisenberg, is implicit in the nature of things. Under a republican form of government, men supposedly accept the responsibility of managing their own affairs, but over the past twenty years the heirs to the American fortune have lost interest in governing themselves. The country still flatters itself with the affectation that it enjoys the government of a sovereign people, but for at least a generation the conduct of its business has been left in the hands of the servants, both public and domestic.

The servant problem

IN THE PRIVATE SECTORS of society, the well-to-do gentry rely upon a retinue of quack doctors, tennis professionals, hairdressers, astrologers, gossip mongers, and metaphysicians wearing the liveries of the American Enterprise Institute or the Ford Foundation. The American democracy as a whole maintains an equally lavish establishment in Washington, employing a staff of functionaries, orators, regulatory officials, aides-de-camp, and assistant chamberlains who perform the chores and ceremonies of government.

Rather than vote or read the Constitution (a document as tiresome as the trust agree-

ments the family lawyers occasionally ask them to sign), the heirs prefer to go to Acapulco or Aspen to practice macrobiotic breathing and play sexual charades. They have better things to do with their lives than to bother with the details of preserving their freedom, and so they spend their time making themselves beautiful, holding themselves in perpetual readiness for the incarnations promised by the dealers in cosmetics and religion.

The servants meanwhile go about the increasingly expensive task of maintaining the illusions of grace and favor. The family lawyers sell off the assets of the estate (lands, houses, corporations, jewelry, and technical information), and the resident intellectuals explain that among the best people the idea of scarcity has become fashionable, that it is a proof of good breeding and refined sensibility to own a windmill or a wood-burning stove. Politicians and Cabinet ministers appear in the role of the butler who finds phrases of art with which to conceal the embarrassments of the young master's profligacy and reduced circumstances. If the young master no longer belongs to the hunt club, that is not because the young master cannot pay his bills but because the hunt club has been admitting the wrong sorts of people; if the chauffeur has to be let go, that is not because the young master cannot afford to buy gas for his Duesenberg but because the chauffeur took to drink and Marxism.

By abdicating their authority and responsibility, the sovereign people also relinquish their courage. Like rich old women in Palm Beach, or a committee of dithering bankers, they become easily frightened by rumors of cancer in the rain or Russian ogres in the woods beyond the tennis courts. Their servants take advantage of the fear and trembling in the drawing room, and so they bring further proofs of all the dreadful things that can happen to a child who loses sight of his nurse. Pretty soon the heirs to fortune come to imagine themselves threatened by enemies of infinite number and variety; their fearfulness persuades them of the need for more regulation, more bureaucracy, more weapons, more places in the federal household for the cook's impoverished cousins—anything and everything the butler wants if only he will consent not to abandon them. Every now and then the heirs make self-pitying remarks about their own weakness, but they have become too frightened, and, at the same time, too comfortable, to do anything to regain their independence of mind. In the library after dinner they might confide to one another their doubts about this fellow Kissinger or about David Rockefeller's manservant, Brzezinski, but then,

the family lawyer inevitably points out, who does anybody know who can speak Russian or remember who was present at the treaty of Versailles?

Given the disinclination of the sovereign people to think for themselves (thought, like lebrity, being the province of the servants), they seek to elect constitutional deities whom they can endow with godlike powers and dominions. Senator Kennedy seems to promise the restoration of an aristocratic Presidency, something along the lines of a freebooting anarchy in which the king's cousins and favorites can take part in the looting of the Turkish Coast. Governor Connally bears comparison to one of the magnificent condottieri of the Italian Renaissance, willing to save a sum of things for a percentage. The ruling prince pays him well enough to afford the luxury of despising him.

WITHIN THE political and intellectual classes the fear of death apparently has become very great. As the decade of the 1970s expires amidst a chorus of recriminations, the prolonged anxiety of the past ten years gives way to a feeling of pervasive dread. By now even the most well-informed persons understand that nobody knows how to figure all the factors into the equations of life and death. They console one another with exquisite discussions of their paralysis and failure to act, working the computations to despair through an infinite series. The American inflation rate of 14 percent possibly is something to do with the human flesh in Emperor Bokassa's icebox, but who can formulate the arithmetic or metaphysical principle of equivalence? What has disease in Ethiopia to do with rebellion in Costa Rica, or Somalia's exiled parrots with Soviet naval vessels in the Indian Ocean?

The biologists say that one gram of bacteria maliciously placed within the ecosystem of the upper atmosphere could exterminate the human race; in New York City the water mains have been so corroded that only the rush of water through the pipes prevents them from boiling apart. During the past eighteen months wars have been fought in Uganda, northwest Africa, Angola, Rhodesia, the Congo, Vietnam, Cambodia, Nicaragua, South Yemen, Iran, Liberia, Ireland, China, and Iraq. Around the conference tables at Geneva and the United Nations the users provide chairs for an increasingly sullen crowd of new and hostile states, armed with nuclear weapons, the nations of the earth stalk one another across the Strait of

Hormuz and through the maze of the London gold market. The workers on the currency exchanges begin to speculate whether the years between 1945 and 1980 might not come to be known as the Thirty-five Years' Peace.

No wonder people cry out for gods to kill and die for them. If bestial apparitions slouch toward Jerusalem to be born, then men feel the need for monsters of their own. "Our old God," said William II on the eve of World War I, speaking affectionately of the deity as if it were a shambling dog.

If the history of the past twenty years has proved to the American Republic the inadequacies of its public servants, so also it has demonstrated the failures of its institutions. Even though the institutions have been made so huge and so complex as to seem the work of divinity, they cannot perform the tasks imposed on them. Consider the requests made of the American Presidency. If the office consisted of a board of directors, and if the board counted among its members Lincoln, Sophocles, and Newton, still it could not move the Persian Gulf to Florida or transform black people into white.

Although a boon to the writers of newspaper editorials, the recognition of inadequacy provides little in the way of comfort, at least as long as the recognition doesn't carry with it the acknowledgement of both the strength and the weakness of the merely human. For the time being, the American Republic appears unwilling to make such a concession, or in Montaigne's phrase to "descend so low as to live." Americans don't like to be reminded of the humanity they share with the less fortunate people of the world, particularly if their humiliation gains them nothing in the international currency markets and if it doesn't make less real the consequences of their mortality.

If a bureaucrat makes a mistake with his strategic doctrine, then it is conceivable that the population of Brentwood or Georgetown might burn to death. This state of affairs is intolerable and un-American. The denial of it results in the birth of an unnatural child, who, like the minotaur, represents the attempt to domesticate the destructive and antisocial instincts that make of every individual an enemy of civilization. Perhaps this explains why none of the candidates stands on the side of life, why nobody speaks for the love between men and women, for the republican virtues of modesty, optimism, patience, and self-restraint.

People who become too fearful of death seek to rid themselves of their fear by embracing death. Given the intensity of his family's will to death, Senator Kennedy cannot help

"Senator Kennedy seems to promise the restoration of an aristocratic Presidency."

drawing to himself those elements of rage and fear, in the collective mind as well as among individuals, that constitute the impulse toward self-annihilation. His birth as a candidate is as unnatural as that of the minotaur. He unites in his own person a number of opposed principles that, in conjunction, all but guarantee the destruction of a man or a republic. By seeming to represent the worst as well as the best that can be found in a man, the chronicle of his suffering somehow excusing his wealth and his sensuality, he allows people to hope, against all the laws of probability, for the best. If Senator Kennedy makes it plausible to believe that anything is possible, he gives the further impression that whatever is possible also can be done at once.

Behind the mask

DURING PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGNS everybody makes a great show of talking about the so-called issues; no matter how they get defined (usually by accident, in an offhand remark at an airport in Wichita or Duluth), these tortured questions of policy serve as the flickering lamps and fairy lights by which the country looks at itself in the mirror. Every four years the country stares into the depths of the glass, hoping to find a face that it can recognize as its own. The hideous beauty of the mask forced over Senator Kennedy's head makes him scarcely identifiable as human. The minotaur conjoins the monstrosity of the modern world with the loss of confidence in democracy.

I don't know how it is possible to make any judgment of the man, and yet, if Senator Kennedy runs for the Presidency, the campaign will make of his character the only issue of substance. What else can anyone talk about? So much has been written and said of him, and so many of the reports so contradictory, that he remains invisible. The gossip about him varies according to the preoccupations of New York and Washington. The New York sources prefer to speak of Mr. Kennedy as a dull-witted rich kid, well-meaning and fond of women, forced against his will into the campaign by the Democratic political machine and by the ambition of political mercenaries, among them the worthy gentlemen who helped him frame the television statement excusing the incident at Chappaquiddick. The Washington sources portray Senator Kennedy as a man of keen intelligence, industrious and concerned, a paragon among Senators, who attends committee meetings, memorizes briefing papers, feels compassion for the constituency

of the poor. I assume that all these reports contain elements of truth. Over the past twenty years I have seen Mr. Kennedy on no more than a score of occasions; sometimes he was drunk and sometimes sober, but he always gave the impression of a man who had lived his life for everybody except himself. I don't know how it is possible not to feel sympathy for the man, and I'm sure that he possesses all the virtues that his admirers ascribe to him—courage, fortitude, sentimental good nature and a bewildered decency of intent.

But I also don't know how it is possible to imagine a man more surely condemned to live within the isolation of the present. His past bears the marks of terrible suffering, and his future must be seen as demonic. If this is true, then Senator Kennedy deserves to be feared as well as pitied. The isolation of the present has a way of imparting to people an indifference to life that is as characteristic of victorious generals as it is of evangelists.

To the extent that Senator Kennedy remains invisible, he can be defined as a gravitational field, drawing to himself devotees who imagine that their own lives acquire meaning only insofar as they fall within the sphere of a magical object. The same kind of adulation attaches itself to rock stars and celebrated criminals. On the few occasions when I have come across Senator Kennedy in a private circumstance, I have found him, as in his public persona, besieged by flatterers and hangers-on, by the Bacchantes who would devour him and yet at the same time, who protect him as if he were the reflection of a god. In particular, I remember a birthday party given for Senator Kennedy in the spring of 1963 by Stephen Smith, his brother-in-law and newly appointed campaign manager. Not knowing more than a few of the other guests in the room, most of them celebrities of large magnitude, I spent some time talking to a girl who had come to the party with the hope of making of herself a birthday present. As we watched Mr. Kennedy blunder back and forth across the dance floor in a game of bull-fighting (the band playing the *paso doble* and Mr. Smith holding the jacket of his tuxedo as if it were the *cap torera*), the girl fretted about her clothes and hair. She had dyed her hair blond for the occasion, but she had begun to think that this might have been a mistake. The Senator's wife was a blond, and maybe he was tired of blond maybe he wanted something in a redhead or brunette. No matter how often I reassured her she refused to be consoled, worrying whether her dress was pretty enough, or the wrong color, or too obvious, or whether the Senator had any known preference in fetishes. During



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the entire conversation she never took her eyes from Mr. Kennedy's person, and I remember thinking that the voracious emptiness in her face was as deadly and as terrifying a thing as I had ever seen. I understood what the Greeks had meant by the Gorgon turning people into stone.

This kind of adoration has an unhappy effect on the people subjected to it, and I can imagine that Senator Kennedy must be sick of being admired for reasons that have nothing to do with himself—because of his name, because people look to him for miracles, preferment, or relief from boredom. Suetonius describes the Emperor Tiberius during the first years of his reign as a just and able administrator of the Roman state. But he soon became disgusted with the fawning of the court and with the business of governing a people who had so little respect for themselves that they could proclaim him a god. Corroded by self-loathing, he retired to Capri, where, during the last nine years of his life, he abandoned himself to the sexual atrocities for which he has been chiefly remembered.

But if the adulation of the mob has a dissolving effect on its victims, it has an equally dissolving effect on the people so eager to negate themselves in the fires of self-immolation. The expression on the face of the girl at Senator Kennedy's birthday party I have seen in the faces of the disciples of Hare Krishna is well as in the faces of the correspondents who followed the Kennedy campaigns of the 1960s and wrote the dispatches from Camelot.

I noticed it most recently at the Council on Foreign Relations, among the leading citizens who had come to listen to Senator Kennedy's views on foreign policy. As is his custom, he said nothing of substance, choosing instead to propound a series of platitudes. But the distinguished ladies and gentlemen who composed the Senator's audience had come to be taken out of themselves, to be transformed in the presence of power, and so they listened to a banal speech as if it were a song sung by Mick Jagger.

THE WORSHIP of man as god is the worship of god as beast. If the minotaur feeds within the labyrinth of the White House, then who but a fool or a moralist would think to argue with the beauty of leath dancing? The pleasures of self-destruction are as dear to the American people as they have been to everybody else who ever had to relinquish his cherished bestiality to something so bloodless and abstract as an idea of civilization. Who else is the American hero if not the

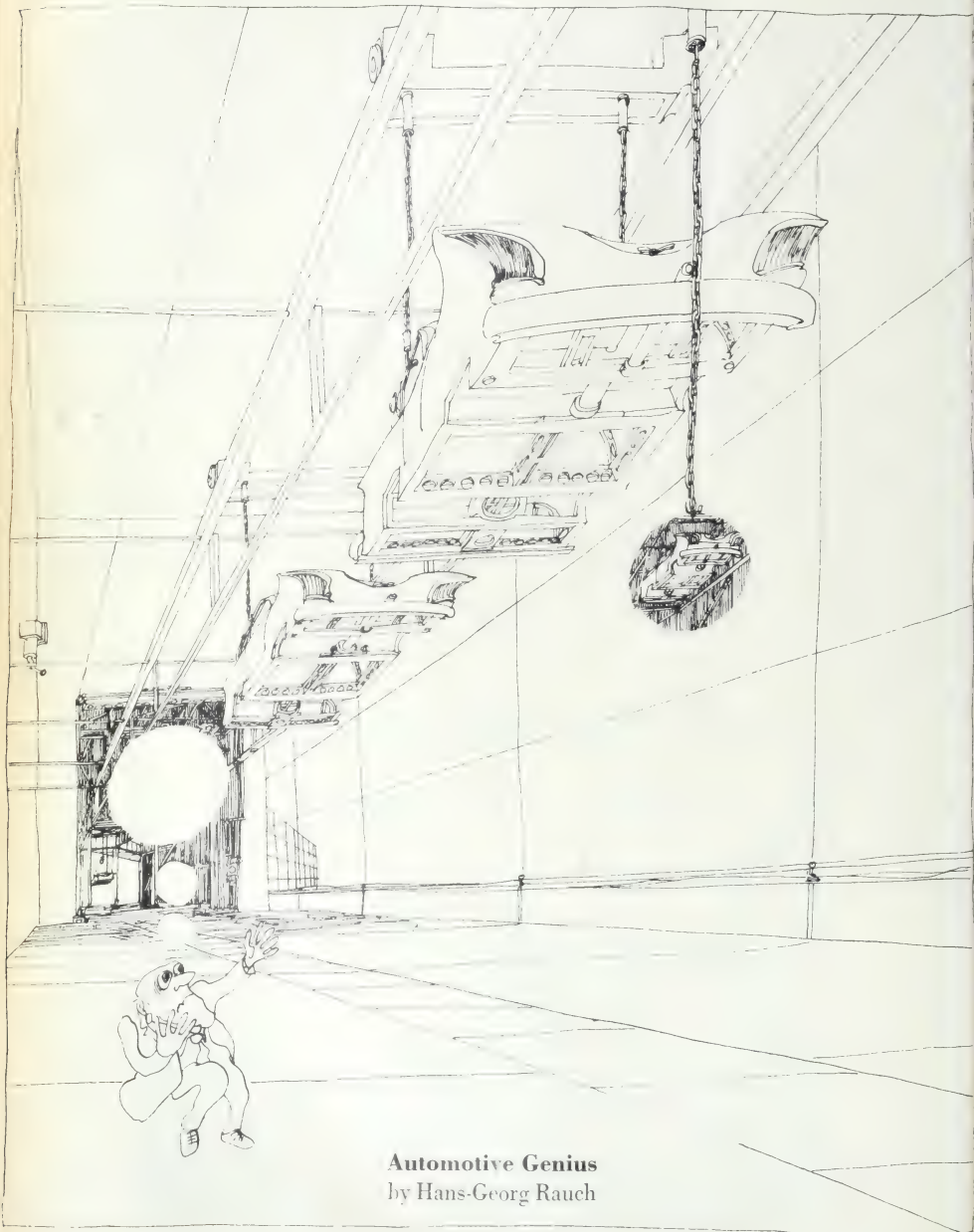
adventurer who proclaims himself the enemy of the society that reared him, shrugging off the restraints of law, art, science, and family as he wanders farther west into the wilderness of the Dakotas or the sea? His descendants crowd through the turnstiles of the nation's gambling casinos and orgiastic spas; resentful of the obligations necessary to the survival of a civilization, they constitute what Freud described as "the hostile majority." Together with the Ayatollah Khomeini and the late Jim Jones of the Jonestown settlement, they prefer to believe that they command the world by magical wish, and they take as their motto Manes Sperber's summation of narcissism, "Let them die who will not love me." Over against this majority the republican idea of government opposes the minority of citizens willing to defend the bridges between time past and time future. But what happens if the minority becomes sick and dispirited, wondering if what little civilization it has acquired is worth defending at all? As I watch Senator Kennedy's triumphal progress through the newspapers, I think of the mood of fatalism that overtook the Wilhelmine Empire of Germany before the advent of World War I. The other day I was reading John Rohl's introduction to the collected correspondence of two German diplomats of the period. Rohl observes that Bethmann Hollweg, the German chancellor, understood that by encouraging Austria to go to war against Serbia he accepted the condition that whatever the war's result, it would lead to the destruction of the existing order. Such a possibility did not appear to him to have been entirely unwelcome, for he regarded the existing order as lifeless and void of ideas. "Everything," he said to a friend, "has become so very old."

Over the past twenty years the mere willingness to campaign for the office of the American Presidency has come to be understood as a self-destructive act. John Kennedy was assassinated, Lyndon Johnson vilified and forced to retire from office, Richard Nixon disgraced, Jimmy Carter reduced to an object of scorn and derision. The American electorate apparently seeks to elect constitutional deities on whom it confers absolute power for a brief period of time and then, discovering itself betrayed, it tears the god to pieces. If the king must die, then only a man as detached from life as Senator Kennedy, cast in the image of every man but himself, could be persuaded to set forth on so perilous a journey. Unfortunately Senator Kennedy does not go alone into the arena. He takes with him as his hostages the idea of the republic as well as the lives of his countrymen. □

"Over the past twenty years the mere willingness to campaign for the office of the American Presidency has come to be understood as a self-destructive act."

HARPER'S
DECEMBER 1979

LINES OF SIGHT



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MISGUIDED MISSILES

THE MX PROJECT

by Wayne Biddle

N THE SUMMER of 1979, Air Force Gen. David C. Jones, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sat before the Senate Armed Services Committee to talk about a treaty by which the United States would limit itself to a total destructive potential about 500,000 times larger than the Manhattan Project provided to break the Axis. "Some believe," he said, "that a perceived Soviet military edge would lead [the Russians] to contemplate seriously a 'bolt from the blue' nuclear attack on the United States. In view of the very substantial U.S. retaliatory capability that would survive any Soviet attack, I think this eventuality is highly unlikely. Rather, I anticipate such a disparity would be reflected in a more confident Soviet leadership, increasingly inclined toward more adventurous behavior in areas where our interests clash and where U.S. ability to respond by conventional means could be circumscribed. Such a situation would carry the seeds of serious miscalculation and run the risk of precipitating a confrontation which neither side wanted or intended."

Thirty years of relative peace have colored the military lexicon. Our generals, moreover, now tend to be nuclear physicists and electrical engineers, not soldiers. Most of what passes for strategy in the nuclear age is theoretical, not practical. It is built on highly unlikely eventualities, perceived edges, influential capabilities, inclinations, reflections, assumptions, repercussions, anticipations. This is not a sexy vocabulary. Preparing for warfare with missiles at intercontinental range does not put hair on a man's chest. It is like spending a lifetime on an algebra homework problem without ever getting graded. The problem itself becomes secondary to the routine of working on it. History and technical momentum assume their own imperative outside the requirements of solution.

"This assessment is not the product of new intelligence," General Jones continued. "My colleagues and I—as well as our predecessors—have testified for more than a decade on where the unfavorable

trends in military efforts would lead in the 1980s. In light of the superior momentum of Soviet strategic force modernization efforts, we believe that, with or without SALT, the United States needs to do far more than we have done in recent years to strengthen and modernize our strategic forces lest the trends toward Soviet superiority become irreversible."

In two paragraphs, General Jones summarized much more than a decade's worth of intelligence. Here lies the sum of defense mentality, East and West, in regard to strategic (that is, nuclear) warfare for the past thirty years: There is the Soviet Union, there is America, and Earth does not appear to be big enough for both. The first step toward understanding the common sense of strategic doctrine starts here. A project like the MX—gargantuan, complex, fantastic in every realm from technology to fiscal authority—depends on this acceptance of a fundamentally irreconcilable distrust. The bad blood is old, dating at least from Franklin D. Roosevelt's decision in favor of the diplomatic and military coercive advantages of excluding his Soviet ally from any official access to information about the Bomb.

In the methodical craziness that is the essence of strategic doctrine, the MX (for Missile Experimental) weights the tail of every crack-the-whip ever played. The statistics that describe it point toward technological mobilization on a scale unprecedented in peacetime: \$33 billion minimum project investment, 24,000-man minimum construction force, 8,000-to-10,000-square-mile minimum deployment area, 10,000-mile minimum roadway development. The missile itself is two times larger in most dimensions than anything in the present American arsenal. A mammoth tractor will constantly drag it across southwestern desert valleys so that the Russians never know where to pinpoint it. In short, it is the end-all in labyrinthine planning that rose from the shrill political warfare of the late 1940s.

Planning for destruction

THE SAME National Security Act of 1947 that, among other things, led to the formation of the National Security Council and the Central Intelligence Agency also allowed the Joint Chiefs to draft contingencies for nuclear war. Maj. Gen. Curtis LeMay set the tone for an epoch with his warning that the United States had the means to "depopulate vast areas of the earth's surface, leaving only vestigial remnants of man's material works."

These plans—with code names like Charioteer, Cogwheel, Dualism, Fleetwood, Dropshot—mostly provided for a concerted attack employing atomic bombs against governmental, political, and administrative centers, urban industrial areas, and select-

ed petroleum targets inside the U.S.S.R. from bases in the Western Hemisphere and Britain. Charioteer, for example, called for the Strategic Air Command to deliver 133 atomic weapons on seventy Russian cities or industrial centers within thirty days. Eight bombs would be dropped on Moscow to destroy forty square miles of that capital. Concurrently, seven bombs would be dispatched to Leningrad, Russia's second city and largest port. In today's parlance, this is called *countervalue* targeting. Because stockpiles were limited and consisted only of fission bombs through the early 1950s, countervalue attacks against "soft," easy-to-find cities were the prime characteristic of our strategic policy.

By the mid-1950s, as American and Russian stockpiles grew and as Soviet airpower came to be recognized as the chief threat to NATO, the emphasis of American targeting policy began to shift toward specifically defined military objectives, or *counterforce*. In 1959, President Eisenhower asked the National Security Council to analyze alternative nuclear-war-fighting strategies. The resultant study argued for an "optimum mix" of countervalue and counterforce. At the same time, a series of studies on "No Cities" strategies was in progress at the Rand Corporation. Andrew W. Marshall, William Kaufmann, Albert Wohlstetter, and Daniel Ellsberg, among others, showed the advantages of withholding attacks on cities and population. Robert McNamara was introduced to No Cities strategy in a formal briefing by Kaufmann within a week after taking office as Secretary of Defense in 1961. Much of what happened in the next two years resembles today's activity among strategic planners in Washington.

The nuclear-war-fighting plan inherited by the Kennedy Administration contained only one scenario: the U.S. would launch all its strategic delivery vehicles immediately upon the initiation of war with the U.S.S.R. No reserves were to be held, no provision was made for preservation of command-and-control channels. The target list was predominantly Soviet and satellite cities. In other words, Armageddon. Expected Soviet, Chinese, and satellite fatalities were estimated by the Joint Chiefs to be between 360 and 520 million. To replace this crudity, McNamara ordered the Joint Chiefs to "prepare a doctrine which, if accepted, would permit controlled response and negotiating pauses in the event of thermonuclear war." Work on this revised plan, done mainly by Daniel Ellsberg and several other Rand alumni, was officially adopted in 1962. Above all, it called for a much more refined spectrum of targets. The implied shift from "massive retaliation" to "controlled flexible response" required major alterations in the American weapons list, including an expanded and redesigned ICBM force with improved accuracy and high warhead yields, a variety of options for submarine-launched ballistic missiles, and the procurement of a force of

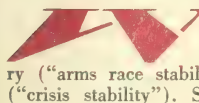
Wayne Biddle, whose glossary of scientific terms "From Alpha to X Ray" appeared in the August issue, is writing a book developed from that article for Viking Press.

reconnaissance-strike bombers with cruise missiles. Twenty years and many billions of dollars later, this is where we stand.

Almost immediately, however, McNamara shied away from his declared position that basic military strategy in a nuclear war should be approached in the same way that more conventional operations had been regarded in the past. "We do not want a comprehensive damage limitation posture," he soon wrote. Most of the reasons for his retreat from counterforce are still relevant. First, there was already much domestic criticism of the first-strike implications of counterforce strategy, occasioned by President Kennedy's remark that "Khrushchev must not be certain that, where its vital interests are threatened, the United States will never strike first." If one plans to shoot at missiles, one is talking about a first strike, because there is no advantage in hitting empty launchers. Then as now, few people expected that war would stop after each side bagged its limit of missiles. Second, as the Soviet arsenal grew larger and hardened against nuclear attack, McNamara believed the destruction of any significant number of their missiles would be unlikely. Third, NATO allies were afraid that a No Cities policy would separate European security from American by enhancing the possibility of nuclear war on European territory while the Russian and American homelands stayed clean. Finally, McNamara faced bureaucratic trouble. As soon as he started to draw up the defense budget for fiscal 1964, it became obvious that the military services, particularly the Air Force, were going to use his policy to request wide-open spending on the most audacious weapons systems they could think of. From then on, the Secretary found himself using strategic doctrine as a magic wand in the continual Pentagon budget rituals.

Since McNamara's time, we have survived "assured destruction," "parity," "essential equivalence," and "sufficiency." The last term belonged to Kissinger and Nixon. When their Deputy Secretary of Defense, David Packard, was once asked what it meant, he answered: "It means it's a good word to use in a speech. Beyond that, it doesn't mean a goddamned thing." Though there is surely truth in Packard's observation, we can nonetheless glean some information from comparing catchwords. The road from massive retaliation to deterrence is, ostensibly, the course from Cold War to détente.

The triple threat of Triad



WASHINGTON SAYS that we try to deter nuclear war at relatively low levels of weaponry ("arms race stability") and political anxiety ("crisis stability"). Should deterrence fail, the


Commander in Chief must have the means to inflict maximum misery on the enemy's homeland. Traditionally, a full deterrent strike has been considered the destruction of 25 percent of the opponent's population and 50 percent of his industry by immediate blast and radiation. Destruction on this scale can probably be achieved by between 200 and 400 weapons of one-megaton yield each. The military problem is therefore not to build up nuclear inventory, since both major powers already exceed the 200-400 range by such fat margins that slight increases or decreases are meaningless. The trick is actually to ensure the ability to deliver sufficient destruction.

For twenty years, the United States has maintained a Triad, a triple set of weapons systems for this purpose—long-range bombers, submarines, and land-based intercontinental missiles. Development of the three-element arsenal was a historical accident. In the 1950s, the military branches competed to build new strategic weapons. By the time McNamara conducted his review of targeting policy and required forces, the Triad was a foregone conclusion even though it reflected no logical plan. While any one of the three "legs" is fully capable of ending the world we know, each is thought vulnerable to potential threats. On the ground that the Triad provides needless overinsurance, it is easy to criticize. But for a mission so vital as deterrence, to avoid dependence on one set of technologies does not seem unreasonable. As a means of deepening the problems that face Soviet defense planners, of providing extended target coverage, and as a general safeguard, the Triad is natural and inevitable. Or so the common sense goes.

The oldest of the American strategic weapons are the B-52 bombers. Some 700 of the long-range aircraft were produced in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Much of the original force has been retired or was lost in Vietnam, but there are still 348 of these amazingly resilient machines in strike-configured service. Over the years they have been retrofitted with modern equipment, and the Air Force is upgrading 269 with new guidance systems at a cost of \$2.4 billion through fiscal 1983. Of the 269, some 173 will be fitted to carry 20 cruise missiles each (in all, 3,418 cruise missiles will be procured at a cost of \$4.5 billion spread out from now through the mid-1980s). Despite constant improvements, however, the B-52s and the jet tankers that refuel them will probably have to be discarded in the early 1990s. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that if they are replaced with a comparable mix, then an additional \$35-\$45 billion (in 1979 dollars) would have to be spent to maintain a strategic bomber force.

The best thing about this "air-breathing" leg of the Triad is its flexibility. In peacetime, about 30 percent of the force is on alert, which means that the crews are in an alert facility with their planes

in normal parking areas. States of higher alert for up to 80 percent of the planes can be reached in times of crisis, with the crews in the aircraft at the end of the runway, auxiliary power units on, and, at the highest posture, the engines turning. Once airborne, they can always be called back if diplomacy averts war in time. Most of the B-52s carry a combination of gravity bombs and short-range attack missiles (SRAMs). The gravity bombs, usually four to a plane, can be either fixed one-megaton devices or variable-yield models that let you choose how big a blast you want up to more than 200 kilotons. SRAMs can deliver a 200-kiloton warhead more than 100 miles away at three times the speed of sound. All B-52s bristle with exotic defensive electronic countermeasures and offensive avionics designed to bamboozle Soviet air defenses. With the deployment of cruise missiles, the problem of bomber penetration will be alleviated considerably by the new weapon's 750- to 2,000-mile range. The B-52 will then function largely as a remote launch platform. All in all, by the mid-1980s the air-breathing leg will represent a total arsenal of about 5,000 warheads. At the highest alert status, fewer than sixty B-52s could be expected to destroy 80 percent of the Soviet industrial target base. Just forty planes would be needed to deliver enough cruise missiles to nullify 50 percent of the military target base.

 **THE SUBMARINE FLEET** that makes up the second leg of the Triad is composed of forty-one nuclear-powered ships delivered to the Navy between 1960 and 1967. Robert McNamara inherited specific authorization for nineteen Polaris submarines, but the system worked so well and was so perfectly suited to the emphasis on survivability under attack that he expanded the program to its present size. As with the B-52, most of the Polaris submarines have been modernized over the years, though the Navy proposed this year to abandon ten of the older ones between 1980 and 1984. Of the forty-one ships, ten carry a total of 160 Polaris missiles, each armed with three 200-kiloton H-bombs. The other thirty-one have been fitted with 496 Poseidon missiles, each of which carries eight to ten independently targetable 40-kiloton warheads. Twelve of these boats will, in turn, be retrofitted with 192 of the newest Trident missiles, which have almost twice the range of the Poseidon and carry eight 100-kiloton warheads. A brand new submarine, also called Trident, will gradually replace those in the aging Polaris fleet. The first of these was launched this year at a cost of \$1.5 billion and is scheduled to start military operations in 1981 with twenty-four Trident I missiles on board. Congress has appropriated enough money for six more. If the Navy gets all thirteen of the Tridents it hopes

for through the late 1980s, the cost will reach at least \$25.5 billion.

At sea, the submarine-launched-ballistic-missile (SLBM) force is essentially invulnerable to pre-emptive strikes. Barring some totally unforeseen Soviet breakthrough in antisubmarine warfare, it will remain that way into the next century. The ability to patrol virtually unchallenged in vast ocean areas represents an untargetable threat to the Russians. For technical and bureaucratic-political reasons, Polaris has been limited traditionally to missions against countervalue targets. In the past few years, however, especially since the addition of Poseidon missiles and improved navigational aids, the system has achieved counterforce capability. Although restricted to particular situations—a first strike or an immediate follow-up where launch information can be completely coordinated in advance, or slow-motion counterforce fighting in which navigation and communication gear are left intact—the Navy exploits the hard-target potential of its Triad leg to the utmost. This enables the Navy to compete with the Air Force over a wider range of budgets and assures that its position will be maintained through future generations of sea-launched missiles, which are only justifiable under the counterforce sun. By the mid-1980s, the sea-based force will field about 6,500 warheads. Under normal peacetime alert conditions (about 55 percent of the Poseidon fleet at sea), a mere fifteen subs would be enough to achieve 80-percent damage to the Soviet industrial target base even after a Soviet first strike. Using only Poseidon missiles, about 50 percent of the military base would be destroyed. If Poseidon is replaced even partially by Trident, the military percentage increases significantly.

The remaining leg of the Triad occupies a special place in the popular imagination. When most of us think about nuclear war, we picture those big prickly missiles blasting out of silos under a Dakota wheat field. The sexual symbolism alone is enough to trigger restless sleep. Though only 30 percent of American strategic force is based this way, the ICBM leg has always played a disproportionately large role in determining objective military clout. Secretary of Defense Harold Brown, in his annual report for fiscal 1980, admitted that "the attributes of the ICBM force are emphasized in Soviet doctrinal writings and in many public discussions of the strategic balance." It can be argued that a decision not to modernize the land-based missiles would be interpreted by military observers around the world as a sign of inferiority, whatever other strengths we might have.

Currently deployed in the midwestern states are 54 Titan II missiles, 450 Minuteman IIs, and 550 Minuteman IIIs. The Titan is an old giant, operational since 1963 with a single nine-megaton warhead that is by far the most powerful in the U.S. arsenal (*blockbuster* does not do it justice, so let us

call it an *earth-splitter*—it can dig out a crater 1,000 feet deep and a mile across). This is the same rocket that was used to launch Gemini astronauts—a tribute to its reliability. The Minuteman II and III became active in 1965 and 1970, respectively. The II is much more accurate than the Titan, so its single H-bomb needs to be “only” two megatons (by rough calculation, a twofold increase in accuracy is equivalent to an eightfold increase in destructive power). Minuteman III can carry a heavier payload with twice the accuracy of II, so it has had the most advanced upgrading. It now holds three independently targetable devices of 170 kilotons each, which will soon be replaced by 350-kiloton models that are three times more accurate than Minuteman II. Minuteman’s most attractive virtue may be that it provides more than 65 percent of Triad forces on alert at an annual operating cost about one-third that of SLBMs and one-fourth that of the bomber force. For quick response, rapid retargeting, accuracy, and survivable command and control, the three ICBMs together offer incomparable advantages over submarines and bombers. That, at least, is the common assumption.

Needless to say, the numbers, units of measurement, and acronyms used to discuss the Triad tend quickly to impede. So it is important to find something handy to hold onto. Remember, first, that the weakest U.S. warhead is about three times the size of the Hiroshima bomb. Keep in mind also that

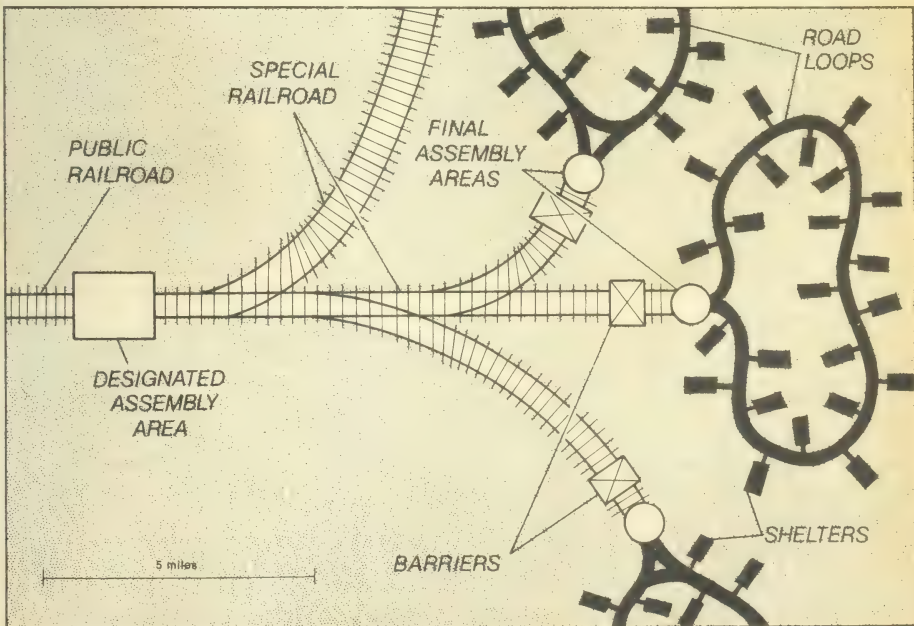
even after a massive Soviet first strike while U.S. forces are in their normal, day-to-day alert status, Congress has estimated that the following would hold true: 1) each leg of the Triad could, by itself, destroy at least 75 percent of the Soviet industrial target base; 2) two of the three legs could destroy at least 65 percent of the industrial targets and the military targets other than Soviet ICBM silos; and 3) all three legs could destroy more than 80 percent of the industrial targets, general-purpose force targets, and governmental centers, while keeping 1,000 weapons in reserve to continue the conflict if necessary. Strategic postures are designed to deter in the worst possible case. In effect, our generals are paid to be hyperparanoid.

Competition and delays



N ICBM is made of a booster rocket with an H-bomb mounted atop.

When the chemicals in the booster are mixed at launch they burn ferociously, lifting the H-bomb through the earth’s dense lower atmosphere to a height of about 60 miles. Then the rocket shuts off, whereupon the H-bomb separates from its booster. Under the influence of gravity, it coasts up through space to about 600 miles before it starts to fall back down. For a typical distance of 6,000 miles be-



In the Nevada desert, missiles arrive by train at their new mobile-base home.

sions in which everybody wants a voice. When confronted with the press conference remark, one State Department official snapped, "The President was expressing his own opinion."


Reports of a \$30-billion program and the growing trickle of MX contracts from the Pentagon had already cultivated tendentious audiences around Washington. The thrust of most anti-MX arguments involved the system itself. The interim Vladivostok SALT accord, for example, provided for verification of compliance by each side through "national technical means," a treaty euphemism for spy satellites. The text stated: "Each Party undertakes not to use deliberate concealment measures which impede verification by national technical means of compliance with the provisions of this Interim Agreement." Would not an MX hidden in a trench or housed in a shelter amid a hive of empty ones violate the letter or spirit of SALT? The high yield and accuracy of the missile, and thus its counterforce capability, was another area of contention. Arms controllers believe counterforce undermines the concept of deterrence. If you can neutralize all or most of your adversary's missiles, deterrence simply ceases to exist as a working proposition. Moreover, the side achieving counterforce becomes an inviting target itself, since the opponent knows that only by striking first can he be certain his own weapons will survive. Consequently, stability is replaced by a hair trigger. Pro-MX arguments, on the other hand, insisted that the verification task was not insurmountable, and that the MX posed no threat to deterrence. No matter how effective the new missiles were against Soviet silos, hostile submarine-launched warheads and at least some bombers would always survive to hit their targets. Counterforce weapons provide a President with flexibility in a "limited" nuclear exchange. If attacked, he would not face the choice between destroying the world or doing nothing to prove his humane disposition. A couple of hundred Soviet and American missiles fly back and forth—and pop!—everybody is back at Geneva.

These debates lost some of their poignancy when Jimmy Carter canceled the \$25-billion B-1 bomber. The price of aerospace stocks dropped in New York, and the Air Force command went into a tailspin. Although they were simultaneously handed another weapons system—cruise missiles launched from standoff aircraft—the supersonic, manned, penetration bomber was as central to Air Force pride as nuclear surface ships are to the Navy's. Faced with a sudden void in bureaucratic power and strategic might, the generals naturally seized on the MX as their do-or-die project. Coincidentally, the arms talks between Cyrus Vance and Anatoly Dobrynin reached a stalemate at about the same time. Pressure was building rapidly on Mr. Carter to deploy the MX as a SALT bargaining lever and a palliative for the loss of the B-1. Washington hawks administered their first real dose of "show your toughness to the

Russians" medicine, and Mr. Carter's curiously outspoken enthusiasm for a neutron bomb was proof of its fast effect.

From the spring of 1977 through early fall, the Air Force plunged forward, making many of the same claims about cost-effectiveness and survivability for a land-mobile MX that it had been obliged to abandon with air-mobile. The new favorite option was to build 250 subterranean concrete trenches twenty miles long with a missile in each one that would roll back and forth on wheels. Theoretically, the Russians would have to aim bombs along the whole hardened length of the trench to ensure neutralization of the missile. But under SALT restrictions, they could not field enough ICBMs to deliver so many warheads. Test trenches were dug in Arizona, and a great number of Air Force spokesmen—including General Jones and Thomas Reed, Ford's Secretary of the Air Force—swore by the system's virtues before the Armed Services committees of Congress.

Request denied

RINCE BISMARCK, in his *Reminiscences* (1898), found it self-evident that treaties are valid only as long as they are useful to the nations that sign them. Three days after the 1972 SALT I agreement officially expired, on October 3, 1977, a report leaked to the press that Harold Brown had tentatively approved full-scale MX development funds totaling \$245 million.

That \$245 million looked like a solid promissory note. Debate moved promptly out of the back rooms and into the streets. Thomas McIntyre, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Research Subcommittee, revealed that his colleagues had concluded in 1976 that "Pentagon bureaucrats were moving the MX along and thereby committing this country to the idea of limited nuclear war outside the formal presidential guidance which is supposed to define America's strategic objectives." In a two-page statement, McIntyre said he was deeply angered that Harold Brown had accelerated MX development without completing the study of the weapon that Congress ordered the previous year. The MX was "a runaway program" that "will give the Soviets a motive for striking first and will make the outbreak of nuclear war more likely."

Brown went on the offensive, too, albeit from the comfortable distance of the aircraft carrier U.S.S. *Saratoga* seventy miles off the coast of Naples. In his first detailed public discussion of the MX (he had testified in secret before Congressional committees), he listed the principal advantages of the system. "It would be able to fight out a protracted thermonuclear exchange, if that turned out to be feasible." As for the disadvantages or "uncertain-

ties" of the new program, the Secretary said, "Technical features are still in the process of being proven out. How hard can you make something in the tunnel underground or in a hard garage?" There were also concerns about public welcome. "An uncertainty is how acceptable it will be to a local population that has armed nuclear missiles running around back and forth underground." And in regard to SALT verifiability: "It's going to be hard to verify the number of missiles in a tunnel or in a series of hard garages. I think there are ways out of that. Quite aside from the usual exposure given in the budgetary process or by the newspapers in the United States, it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that we can take people down in the tunnel." If the Secretary had been back at the Pentagon press auditorium instead of in the captain's dining quarters on the *Saratoga*, perhaps some brash reporter might have asked him whether the Russians would be willing to take American observers down into their tunnels.

Nothing ensures the airing of secret testimony faster than the release of federal contract money. As the Air Force began to solicit design submissions from the aerospace industry, House hearings in which Brown had done much more than just cover a few uncertainties were made public. He had voiced basic misgivings. Both the United States and the Soviet Union would be better off, apparently, if the United States deployed the new cruise missile instead of the silo-busting MX. Although "there may well be a need to deploy" some advanced land-based missile like MX in the mid-1980s, "none of the land-based ballistic missile options" looked better than the bomber-cruise missile combination "as a way of retaining our retaliatory capability at parity with the Soviets through the 1980s." Brown added that the MX would complicate arms-control efforts, since Soviet satellites could not tell how many missiles were inside one long tunnel.

From the earliest days, the Air Force had complained that support for MX production was somewhat muddled by conflicting ideas. Obviously, though, the highest levels of the Pentagon were as muddled as any place else. To the Defense Secretary's ambivalent remarks one must add the concomitant declaration by Chief of Staff Jones: "I think it will be a long time before [the Russians] could disarm the Minuteman force with any great assurance. I question whether they will ever be able to do that." And Chief of Research and Development Slay: "We already have on the books [in storage] some 123 Minuteman III missiles that we could deploy if the occasion should arise." And Chairman of the Joint Chiefs George Brown: "We have made tremendous technical progress since SALT I in our missile force; . . . we have stressed critical systems technology, such as guidance and control, propulsion and reentry systems that will result in even more improvements in our present systems." The


Air Force repeatedly contended that there was a shortage of modern weapons able to hit such super-hard Soviet targets as missile silos. But the question arose: Does the United States need that capability in a retaliatory strike, or is the Air Force thinking of a first strike against Soviet ICBMs?

Most intelligence analysts agreed that the United States held a clear advantage over the Russians, who had only recently deployed missiles with on-board navigational computers. The Soviets surprised everyone in 1977 when they acquired counter-silo accuracy by modifying missiles already in the field, instead of waiting to replace them with a new generation, as was their normal procedure. Still, all their ICBMs were much less reliable than Minuteman and required longer periods of launch preparation. If mobility was the prime factor, as the Air Force claimed, then why was an investment of more than \$30 billion necessary when the Navy already floated 656 SLBMs in forty-one boats, with cruise missiles and Trident on the horizon? Few people believed in the efficacy of a strategic posture that allowed an American President to take "limited coercive action" via the MX, reasonably confident that a devastating counterforce option was not available to the Soviet Union. Though staff members at the Hudson Institute, for example, proffered such scenarios, Defense Department officials explained that while the MX could be used under certain conditions for the flexible response option against widely separated targets requiring pinpoint accuracy, it was not designed for that purpose. There is nothing "limited" about a missile that carries ten H-bombs.

Private and not-so-private debate widened through the months immediately following Harold Brown's decision. Its net effect on the Carter Administration was growing uncertainty about how new missiles should be deployed and the potential impact their development and production could have on relations with the Soviet Union—particularly on SALT. If, indeed, the White House was responsible for the October press leak, then perhaps the subsequent weeks were used to sound out the Kremlin's reaction. By Christmas, enough words had apparently traveled back and forth to activate the President. He quietly turned down the Pentagon's request for full-scale funding. Although the decision provided for continuation of some systems work, it stirred questions about the overall effort and severely embarrassed the Secretary of Defense. Administration sources indicated that the National Security Council and the Office of Management and Budget had both argued against Brown. There were misgivings about arms-control implications and the technical soundness of the trench-basing mode. Other options, such as multiple aboveground shelters, would have to be weighed before Jimmy Carter committed himself.

Once again, a \$30-billion project was told to wait and see.

Toughest kid on the block



EFT HOLDING the line, of course, were Air Force officers and Defense Department civilians whose salaried world is the realm of perceived edges. Perhaps an allegory will help to clarify their ongoing predicament. Let us say that a father sets out to protect his son's bike from being stolen. He begins by simply placing it in the back yard, but the thieves easily take it. So he chains a new one, probably a better one, to a fencepost. But the chain is soon cut. For the next, even nicer, bike, he builds a shed with a padlocked door. In a surprisingly short time, the thieves learn how to break into the shed. Exasperated, angry, yet somehow challenged, the loyal father finally rents a van to keep his son's newest, best bike constantly moving around town so that the robbers never know exactly where to strike. At night, though, after his boy goes happily off to bed, his wife comes to him and whispers, "This is quite mad, you know. How did we come to this?"

Those who occupy seats of power at the Pentagon are nowhere close—even in conscience—to the dog-toothed, smelly-fingered characters in a David Levine cartoon. Rather, a detailed chronology of a project the size of the MX shows them to be typical managers whose executive ambition and worldly concern have led them not into permanent academic or corporate roles but into the military—which was once, after all, a noble station. When they look around themselves at the strategic shape of things, it is likely that they find it quite mad, too, and wonder how we got here. Instead of calling the dark-some escalation off, however, they keep pushing for that perfect, thief-proof system that will make the world safe for . . . bicycles?

William Perry, Under-Secretary of Defense for Research and Development, receives his guests in an office decorated with Japanese silkprints. He is fine-mannered and not given to converse in military-scientific jargon—a trait that has won him admiration and trust on Capitol Hill. He offers the visitor tea. On the low table between sofas far from his desk is a cut-glass vase holding a single, perfect pink rosebud. "We have deployed in our strategic forces today," he says quietly over the rose, "more than 9,000 nuclear warheads. And so you could fairly ask: Why in the world would anybody need any more? There are already enough to devastate the Soviet Union or any other country, with some to spare." The answer is that the size of an arsenal is less important than its survivability. The reason there are so many warheads to begin with is to provide a hedge against losing most of them in a surprise attack. "We spent a long, agonizing year considering whether we wanted to make the investment in the MX program. That was not a knee-jerk reac-

tion in this building—not by Harold Brown, not by myself, not by the President certainly. We were looking very hard at the question of *Do we need a Triad?* We seriously considered going down to a Dyad; saying that the ICBMs are a liability, we will focus our effort on the submarine force. What is so magic about three? Why a trinity? Is it a theological conviction we have? Are we hung up on a tradition that originally grew out of service rivalries? We reexamined it on first principles." And decided not only to keep it, but to expand it with the counterforce MX. "For a long time we thought we could maintain stability by not having counterforce. The Soviet Union has now achieved counterforce, which is an unfortunate development, one they should not have undertaken. In our last attempt to deter them from this, at the March, 1977, SALT negotiation, it was summarily rejected. So now the question is, What do we do about it? The appropriate response is to look to the survivability of our forces. The great beauty of MX is that its survivability can be totally decoupled from its striking power. Survivability is measured by how many shelters we build, and striking power is measured by how many missiles we build. The two can be negotiated independently." But at what level of either factor will the Soviets feel sufficiently deterred? "We do not know what the hell deters the leaders of the Soviet Union today, much less the leaders five years from now. At one level we can deter just by having five submarines at sea which are quite capable of devastating the industrial, populated areas of the Soviet Union. If they think the same way I think about nuclear war, then that is enough. But if somehow their war planners become convinced that it is credible to attack our strategic forces, then we are in a vulnerable position. The Secretary uses the interesting term 'countervailing strategy.' The philosophy of that is *whatever* form of attack they choose to make on the United States, they could gain no military advantage. Whatever they do, they end up worse off. If we can deploy our forces so that that statement is always true, then we have the highest level of stability. The question is: What actions can we take and how much are we willing to pay? That is what it is all about. If you are perceived to be militarily strong, then you have the maximum chance of surviving political challenges without having to use military power. It is like being *thought* to be the toughest kid on the block—you do not get challenged very often."

Lt. Gen. Thomas P. Stafford, the Air Force Deputy Chief of Staff for Research, Development, and Acquisition, has faced a lot of challenges in outer space. *The Guinness Book of World Records* cites him for the highest reentry speed on any manned space flight (during Apollo X). Of all the people in the Pentagon, perhaps he alone knows what it would be like if a man could be an H-bomb. There is art in his office, but the paintings are of that kitschy institu-

tional sort wherein obsolete tactical weapons rest serenely in an autumn wood. He speaks with a rural Oklahoma accent and slaps the table to accentuate what he believes. "Right now they've got us three and a half to one in throw-weight, two and a half to one in reentry vehicles. I'm talking land-based ICBMs. And six and a half to one in megatons. Soon they'll have us three and a half to one in reentry vehicles, megatons about the same, and throw-weight goes up to four. Their accuracy is as good as ours. They could eventually reach four and a half to five times as many reentry vehicles, megatons could get as high as six and a half to one. They're replacing their Yankee submarines with their Deltas, okay? The Deltas with the SSN-18 has both 3 and 7 RV [reentry vehicle] configurations. The only time we ever had all these warheads was these little 40-kiloton Poseidons. But mainly what you know about them is that they're headed east somewhere. They'll blow down some apartment buildings."

Dr. Hans Mark, Secretary of the Air Force, came to America from Germany in 1940. His credentials as a physicist are formidable: Laboratory for Nuclear Studies (head of Neutron Physics Group), M.I.T.; Lawrence Radiation Laboratory (head of Experimental Physics Division), University of California at Berkeley; Ames Research Center (director); Defense Science Board (since 1975). He has the fresh-air-and-good-company bearing that the affluent science departments of Cambridge and Palo Alto impart to their professors. And all those years on university campuses have cultivated a historical bent, of a kind. "The deterrence system that was worked out at the Congress of Vienna [1818] was a very interesting one. The problem was that there were four or five power centers rather than two. So the arrangement had to be somewhat more complicated. But the essence was that a balance be struck so that the British could—by proper manipulation of their fleet—prevent a major conflagration on the Continent. And it really worked. Disraeli was once asked who his allies were. He said, 'Britain has no allies, only interests.' The thing went unstable eventually when the other people decided he was a paper tiger. . . . You can go back earlier, too. Marcus Aurelius had an army in Vienna with the sole purpose of deterring movements south. This did not stave off indefinitely the major changes that annihilated Rome. It deterred the inevitable downfall. Unfortunately, we cannot talk to a Carthaginian, but the complete destruction of an enemy is nothing new. I cannot make a case that the existence of nuclear weapons is that different from other things that have been done in the past. The scale of civilization has grown to the point where completely destroying Carthage was a 'smaller' act than a counterforce strike today. But even if the other guy shoots too, we are not going to kill everybody. Wars, in terms of casualties, have become less destructive in recent years primarily

because of the ability to keep people alive and the fact that disease can be controlled. I will argue that the reason a nuclear exchange gives people pause is that it would take us back to where we were before. People, in the large, on both sides were not deterred by the prospects of what war meant in 1939. In spite of all the destruction, if there is a general feeling that yes, we will survive it, then whatever you have does not deter the war. Nuclear weapons create doubt. The theory of deterrence in 1818 depended on the general acceptance that blockades were effective, that they could cause suffering in large populations. Hiroshima created a similar perception."

If one is tough, one does not get pushed around. The other side insists on getting tougher. The cost of confrontation to society today would differ little from the cost in ancient times. Out of this managerial, syllogistic nest falls the MX.

Multiple Aim Point



THE YEAR 1978 was a bad one for the fledgling project. Tests on a subscale buried trench at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, showed that a nuclear blast could send shock waves down the tunnel like a child flicking a jump rope. Command and control systems could also be easily disrupted. A memo prepared by the Office of Management and Budget, intended to guide Defense in putting together budgets for fiscal 1980, proposed that an Air Force request for \$580 million for the MX project be cut in half and that plans to build a prototype missile be helved. Harold Brown was said to have serious doubts over the need to proceed. Officials suggested that the Navy's Trident II missile might be deployed in land-based modes as well as submarines. The Brookings Institution published a report that analyzed the Administration's future defense plans and concluded that unless budgets were increased by \$20 billion in the early 1980s, one or more new strategic programs would have to be abandoned. The report did not advocate moving ahead with the MX project, but predicted that American ICBMs would become increasingly vulnerable. If a new mobile missile were not deployed, land-based missiles "might eventually have to be scrapped."

Moreover, U.S.-Soviet relations reached a low point with President Carter's hawkish June commencement address at the Naval Academy. A commentary in the authoritative international-review section of *Pravda* said: "The Americans and public opinion in Europe are concerned by the fact that the basically aggressive 'hard line' of Zbigniew Brzezinski, who is widely known for his anti-Communism, is getting the upper hand in the White House." *Pravda* reported extensively on a letter sent to Mr. Carter by sixty Americans, including John

Kenneth Galbraith and George F. Kennan, that was critical of statements that could cause deterioration in East-West relations. Too, the Kremlin was quite fed up with Jimmy Carter's human-rights campaign.

These factors together put even more of a brake on the MX project. In closed-session testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Lt. Gen. Slay, now head of the Air Force Systems Command, admitted that the Department of Defense did not possess sufficient technical data to make a decision about the best basing method for the new missile. William Perry said flatly that the trench scheme was "no longer viable." He added that there was considerable uncertainty about the type of missile as well. "To my knowledge, no one in the Administration has decided which missile will be most appropriate for that base. Different systems imply different missiles, and so you end up with a different missile design." The Senate panel unanimously recommended \$158.2 million for ongoing program development, but eventual production looked doubtful.

Any Washington wag could see at this point that it was time for the Air Force to reshuffle the deck. Since an acceptable basing mode continued to be the stickiest problem, designers reached back into their stock of alternatives. These included off-road countryside crawlers, railroad or interstate highway roamers, canal and deep-pond submersibles, lake-bottom creepers, garage dashers, air-mobile lifters, and dispersed shelters. Each had been under study for many years, but only the latter three withstood technical and public-relations scrutiny. The cheapest of these was the dispersed-shelter mode, a "shell game" in which 200 canisters containing MX missiles or dummies would be moved randomly among 4,000 empty silos. Priced at about \$20 billion, the plan was believed suitable to appeal to at least three constituencies: the Soviets, who strongly favored a verifiable limit on nuclear delivery vehicles; Senate hawks, who wanted a new and survivable land-based missile for the 1980s; and the White House, which wanted a SALT treaty that the Soviets would sign and the Senate ratify. Christened MAP, for "Multiple Aim Point," the system was promptly wheeled out as the Air Force's new favorite.

To trumpet a fresh Pentagon consensus before the Senate Armed Services Committee, Harold Brown reported that the new basing mode would be immune to Soviet attack and would cost less than a new generation of submarines. To counter fear that MAP might not be compatible with an arms treaty that limited launching sites rather than missiles, Brown pressed at Cabinet meetings a view shared by the State Department—that any new accord should allow the system. But Arms Control and Disarmament Agency officials suspected right away that Moscow would never agree to MAP. Satellites do not have enough resolution to peer down from

space into silos and tell whether they are empty, filled with dummy missiles, or stacked ten-deep with real ones. On-the-ground inspection would necessitate the same reciprocal arrangement with the Russians, and they would not likely agree to that. Nonetheless, there were plenty of other officials who contended that Mr. Carter must seek MAP to assure domestic critics—before the completion of new arms pacts—that the Administration would never take risks with a weakened Triad.



WITHIN A MONTH after the Pentagon launched MAP, the President's senior advisers agreed to recommend that Cyrus Vance pass the word to Andrei Gromyko in Geneva. Paul Warnke, chief SALT negotiator, would also inform Vladimir Semyonov, his Soviet counterpart, that the United States regarded the multiple-hole system as a proper option for the period after the expiration of a three-year protocol expected to accompany the new SALT pact. Fearful as always of a negative Soviet reaction, Secretary Brown reportedly argued that there was no need to tell the Soviets of American plans, since the United States did not intend to do anything that would violate the terms of agreements being negotiated. One may imagine the "Sure, Harold" response from Kremlin defense ministers.

As the Carter Administration looked for ways to assure the Senate and the public that signing a new SALT treaty was an acceptable risk, the Air Force tried to maneuver MAP into a complimentary light. The best way to combat thousands of Soviet warheads, said new Chief of Staff Lew Allen, was to deploy "a great sponge to absorb" them. MAP would draw off some 6,000 reentry vehicles if the Russians tried to cover the whole network. Joint Chiefs Chairman Jones, whose patience was evidently wearing thin, said, "I consider the mobiles are authorized and therefore MAP is authorized. To me this is not a matter for discussion or negotiation." Although the Air Force's environmental impact statement on the MX system revealed that an area about the size of Connecticut would be needed to deploy a MAP system, it also predicted 44,000 new aerospace jobs and 153,000 jobs in indirect or induced industries.

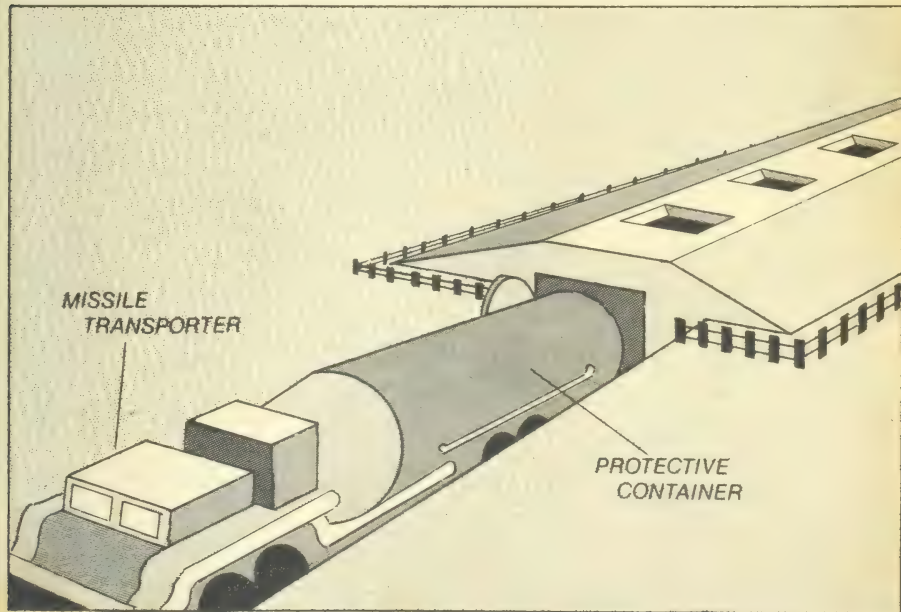
Now, the thought of using a Connecticut-sized chunk of American heartland to absorb Soviet H-bombs like a giant sponge did not really excite anyone outside the Pentagon, 200,000 jobs or no. Even the name "Multiple Aim Point" sounded a bit fatalistic. And when Paul Warnke told Semyonov that America's next ICBM would be hidden among clusters of vacant silos, the Russian was plainly skeptical about counting canisters instead of holes. Warnke himself had to agree that any system that included the use of decoys and dummies was not permissible under SALT. The rule was that "if it looks like a launcher, it counts as a launcher," he

said. A combination of environmental and arms-control objections to MAP thus began to flood from all directions. Fifty-one Congressmen wrote to the President asking him to appoint a commission to assess the dangers of the system. "Our concerns," read the letter, "span the entire spectrum, including the advisability of deploying a great sponge of targets in the U.S. designed to absorb Soviet warheads, MAP's potential negative impact on the negotiation of a SALT agreement, and the enormous cost and questionable strategic utility of the program." Herbert Scoville, Jr., former deputy director of the CIA and assistant director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, said that the Pentagon's first-strike scenario in justifying MAP was a fantasy, because the Soviets could never be sure the United States would not launch its ICBMs before theirs arrived. He added that a Soviet first strike could not knock out the Polaris fleet, in any event. And the Governor of Kansas, Robert F. Bennett, expressed his "growing outrage" at the "unbelievable and inconceivable" proposition that "8 percent of the entire state of Kansas be removed from civilization" by the MAP matrix.

Several strictly military developments during this period colored debate that had by now drifted far from its original military roots, sparse though they ever were. The Soviet Union resumed the encryption of telemetry data from their ICBM tests, in order to hide the number of reentry vehicles and

flight accuracy. Similar deception had been halted previously under the interim SALT I agreement. Pentagon officials revealed that the Soviets had also begun testing their air-defense systems against low-flying drones simulating U.S. cruise missiles. There were reports, too, that the Russians had developed a device to detect the radioactive nuclides deposited in the ocean by the heat exchange from nuclear submarines. During tests, six subs were located at substantial depths and ranges as great as 100 miles. Each of these rather minor occurrences served to multiply concern for maintaining the U.S. Triad. In Washington, meanwhile, President Carter had vetoed the Defense Department's fiscal 1979 authorization bill because it contained unwanted money for a new nuclear aircraft carrier. This meant that when the Pentagon submitted a supplemental request for \$2.2 billion to make up the difference, the carrier money could be applied to items that had earlier been cut back—like the MX. Apprehension and loose cash thus met at the White House to provide \$190 million for full-scale development.

But everybody knew that any move by the Carter Administration to proceed toward a missile without consensus on the basing mode ran counter to the wishes expressed by Congress. Congressmen on both sides of the issue began to suspect that the President was procrastinating in order to mold a SALT agreement—at the expense of ICBMs. Yet neither the President nor his Secretary of Defense saw any




A driver backs his missile into one of the concrete garages around the racetrack just before a Russian H-bomb lands.

other choice. The Air Force had again rushed forth a basing mode that was unacceptable. As the man in the middle, Harold Brown was under the most pressure. Each time he appeared to reconcile competing views at the Pentagon, his recommendation was chewed up by the White House. His military and technical advisers were almost unanimous in pressing for the MAP shell game, but the Commander in Chief was quoted by one aide as terming the proposal "the craziest idea I've ever heard of."

When 1978 ended with no MX in sight, William Perry ordered the Air Force to come up with a detailed alternative plan by springtime. The engineers must have done a lot of head-shaking that day, because their crash-programmed "alternative" was to be air-mobile.

Intelligence and racetracks

HE TANGLE of MX affairs drew on one mostly nontechnical thread, even though engineering problems—such as the shock-wave susceptibility of buried tunnels—continued to inject their own. The clear lesson of 1978 was that the MX project could be as strongly affected by the political vagaries of SALT as by any technological requirement. In fact, the MX was on its way to becoming the first weapons system specifically designed to fit into an arms-control context.

Even the slightest hint that the Russians are able—through SALT—to dictate American weapons design is untenable for the Air Force. SALT agreements have very little impact on planned weapons spending, and this should also hold true for design. While the pacts deal directly with the hardware of nuclear war, the underlying issues are political judgments about Soviet global goals, American interests, and Washington's will to confront Moscow when crisis occurs. U.S. and Soviet strategic doctrines are not symmetrical. Neither side seems willing to settle for an easily defined, nonthreatening form of parity.

Perceptions of strategic thinking in both the East and West divide into three camps: 1) whatever they say, it does not make any difference; 2) no matter what they say, they think the same way we do; and 3) they believe exactly what they say, so therefore they are out to get us. These three biases grow out of two difficulties. First, analysts have a hard time accepting the possibility that two different political systems can deal very differently with a common problem. Second, Americans do not have direct access to Soviet doctrine through official literature or authoritative commentary, while the Soviets are faced with the avalanche of governmental, academic, and popular documentation endemic to an open society. Thus, American insight into Soviet policy is usually restricted to inference from be-


havior, and Soviet insight into ours is confused by the sheer abundance of sources. A testy situation at best.

Despite these serious shortcomings, however, it is possible to generalize. For example, officials of both the United States and the Soviet Union have agreed for a generation that all-out nuclear war would be an immeasurable disaster. Given the Russian experience of total war in modern times and of strategic inferiority since 1945, the human scale of this might well be more concrete to them than to us. Hence the Soviet state cannot renege in any way on its responsibility to defend the people and survive. However terrible, nuclear war must not be separated from the rational interests of the state. Meaningful victory must be considered attainable. If not, then the dialectic of history, upon which Marxist ideology rests, could be broken by the whimsy of an ideologically doomed opponent.

The prevailing American concept of nuclear war, on the other hand, precludes belief in meaningful victory. The awesome, destructiveness of atomic weapons deprives actual combat with them of much value. As a result, we demonstrate little interest in civil defense and until recently have shunned weapons that offer protracted war-fighting capability. Stability is achievable on the basis of a contract between mutually vulnerable societies.

Translated across the SALT table, these differences result in an American willingness to live and let live, under admittedly unpleasant conditions, while the Russians try to orchestrate their own security through improving the prospects of winning a central war. American hawks thus come to believe that we underestimate the competitiveness of Soviet policy, and doves claim that we overestimate the value of what has been achieved. When a monumental error is made, such as the failure of SALT I to ban MIRVs, both schools conclude that arms control is merely a diplomatic ornament.

When James Schlesinger was Secretary of Defense, he wrote that "deterrence... is not something free-floating that exists independently of a credible implementable threat. It requires the most careful structuring of forces that is fully consistent with an agreed-upon strategic concept." Despite the Air Force's hard chaff under the pressure of SALT II, the MX system was not being pared down. Rather, as the events of 1979 would prove, it was being polished into an implementable threat that could not be sidetracked by any arms agreement.

HE THEATRICS of a still-distant Presidential election campaign were in the air when the House Defense Appropriations Subcommittee met in February to consider Jimmy Carter's defense budget for fiscal 1980. Members clashed with Pentagon witnesses over the proposal to increase spending by 3

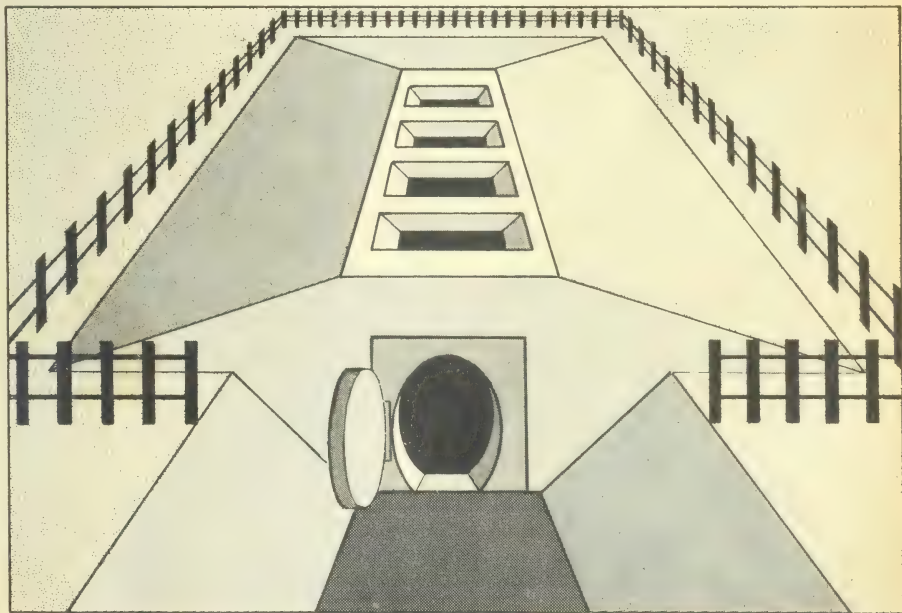
percent in real terms and add \$2.2 billion to the amount already appropriated for 1979. Subcommittee Chairman Joseph Addabbo and Budget Committee Chairman Robert Giaimo, who both represent northeastern urban districts where social programs faced freezes or cuts, were in powerful positions to stifle the requests. Giaimo reminded Harold Brown and General Jones that House rules allowed supplemental appropriations only for emergencies. "What's the great emergency that can't wait?" he asked. Jones's answer pointed directly to SALT: "If the supplemental is not approved, we will be signaling to the world a perpetuation of the slips, cuts, and reductions" that typified recent defense budgets.

The Pentagon was the only federal agency that could look forward to any real increase, other than in welfare programs, that would spend more simply because more people would become eligible. The Carter Administration gave defense about the same slice of the federal budget (23.1 percent) and the gross national product (4.9 percent) as it had for fiscal 1979. In real purchasing power, this was comparable to 1964, the last budget before Vietnam. The largest increase beyond inflation—about 18.7 percent—went to strategic weapons, including \$675 million for an MX flying prototype.

The House Armed Services Committee completed its review of the supplemental by mid-March, after being delayed by the need to pay for export weapons

canceled by the new Iranian government. When Senate Armed Services then met in closed session to mark up the bill, there was instant disagreement over the issue of land-mobile versus air-mobile basing. Defense hard-liners, who emphasized that air-mobile had been rejected by the Air Force once before, saw the Administration's attempt to rejuvenate it as a last-ditch effort to kill the whole program. Although Brown and Jones pointed out that major restudy of air-mobile was in progress and that the new version would differ significantly from the one scrapped in 1974, the Air Force itself still leaned toward the MAP shell game. It went so far as to change the acronym to MPS (for "Multiple Protective Structure") and released a report that said airborne deployment would cost \$29 billion to install and \$900 million a year to maintain—nearly 50 percent more than MAP/MPS.

Through the springtime committee hearings, a 1980 defense budget close to the \$138 billion favored by the President seemed assured. Liberals in both houses were outraged that Defense was the only agency permitted real growth, but their efforts to force the Pentagon into line with others failed by substantial margins. Deep cuts were turned back by Republicans, southerners, and members of the Democratic leadership. Yet the prospect for winning approval of the 1979 supplemental appeared less promising, chiefly because of skepticism that there was any real urgency. Despite the fact that much



The garage door closes on a safely parked MX, which will come out again when needed.


of the debate centered on Iranian destroyers, everyone knew the most crucial item in the bill was the MX.

"It's a conservative Congress," Representative Addabbo said at one point. "A conservative Congress has always been pro-defense." Faced with a June 15 SALT II signing date, the Carter Administration tried everything it could think of to mollify those Congressmen who would not support the treaty without the very thing it was supposed to alleviate: new spending on new weapons. Since the shell game, whether called MAP or MPS, would definitely not be permitted under SALT II restrictions on launchers, and since air-mobile was still too expensive, the Administration began to tout yet another alternative, called the "hybrid trench." In this new "new" concept, each missile would be carried by rail among thirty or more hardened launch sites along an underground tunnel. By lifting the tunnel roof from time to time, we could enable Soviet satellites to verify the number of huge missile trains inside. The Senate Armed Services Committee granted the full supplemental request, but the House Armed Services members—still strongly attached to MAP/MPS—added an amendment requiring the Pentagon to begin work on MPS *unless* the Secretary of Defense himself certified that another system was superior. The hybrid trench was created to satisfy this amendment. And it did.

Of course, by shuffling back toward an underground tunnel fifteen to twenty miles long, the Administration left itself open to the same environmental objections that had been raised a year before. Multiplied 200 times, spread across the open spaces of four western states, the hybrid trench meant colossal disruption. Industry experts predicted that the volume of construction concrete alone would cause shortages throughout the western half of the country. In addition, the Pentagon's environmental impact statement noted that "deployment of the MX system will require large quantities of water for concrete" and "dust suppression." In a water-starved region, where would enough be found to mix 10 million or more tons of cement?

Whether the Air Force ever really took the hybrid trench seriously is debatable. Within weeks after Congress finally approved the supplemental funding bill, the plan disappeared. In its place materialized the newest new scheme of all, the "racetrack." Each of 200 missiles will be loaded aboard a 300-ton transporter, which drives around oval-shaped roadways (open to the public on peaceful days). Situated on the edges of each oval are concrete shelters from which the missile can be launched. If the Soviets attack, the transporters "dash" at thirty miles per hour into the nearest shelter. The racetracks will be built in desert valleys of the Great Basin region of Nevada and Utah, where the Air Force says the locals are eager to play host.

On Friday, September 7, 1979, Jimmy Carter announced to the world that the \$33 billion race-track MX was indeed the final solution. Ten years after Minuteman—three Presidents, two SALT treaties, hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of R&D, and seven favorite basing modes later—the United States Air Force was back in the big time.



T THE RAREFIED LEVEL of strategic doctrine, technology and bureaucracy are both subservient to political perceptions that shift across the planet like hot sand. Competition between East and West is a cynical brand of chivalry, where nuclear weapons hang above great baronial hearthstones like impressive—but infeasible—blunderbusses. The common sense of the MX system differs from everyday common sense because it is circumstantial. As soon as one returns from the realm of deterrence, counterforce, Triad, and SALT, the system's "giggle factor," as one Air Force general calls it, stands out. If billions of dollars were not on the line, if crossbows or catapults were involved instead of H-bombs, then perhaps we could all enjoy a good laugh at the notion of sending rockets around a racetrack faster than our opponent can place his bet.

But the Pentagon is not known for conscious irony. When the Air Force promises the White House Council on Environmental Quality that it will keep MX work quiet from January through April when bighorn sheep "are lambing and are most likely to be sensitive to disturbance," it believes what it says. When Maj. Gen. Jasper Welch, who directed the studies that led to the cruise missile, says that "Middle America understands deterrence a lot better than academics," he is speaking from his heart.

There are still many obstacles ahead for the MX. In October, Nevada county commissioners and mayors, who are supposed to love the project, left a Carson City session of Rep. James Santini's Subcommittee on Public Lands "scratching their heads," according to one aide. After being treated to a plane ride over prospective valley locations—and a full day of Air Force speeches about water, social services for 24,000 workers, land-use planning, et cetera—they were a bit haunted by all the unanswered questions. Thomas Stafford fears the court suits of "obscure environmental groups" for good reason. And Congress, as always, has final budgetary control over the extent of deployment. But the road of strategic doctrine since World War II does not provide much evidence for the reversal of weapons momentum. By calling their new missile's home a racetrack, the Air Force will perhaps give fresh currency to a quotation from Henry Adams: "Man has mounted science, and is now run away with." □

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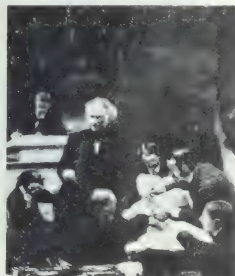
Fresh Holland Beer

Imported

OBSERVATION AND SCHOLARSHIP EXAMINATION

Check the correct answer*

by Don Celender



What operation is being performed in Eakins's *The Gross Clinic*?

- a. amputation of the leg
- b. removal of blood clots
- c. setting of a compound fracture
- d. removal of a bone sequestrum in a case of osteomyelitis



What type of rifle is being fired in Goya's *The Third of May, 1808*?

- a. Winchester
- b. Garand
- c. Mauser
- d. 1776 Pattern Musket
- e. Jacquard

- 3. About how many works did Joseph Mallord William Turner complete?
 - a. 850
 - b. 1,600
 - c. 4,800
 - d. 19,000

- 4. What kind of glue did Kurt Schwitters use?
 - a. water base
 - b. rubber base
 - c. resin base
 - d. animal base

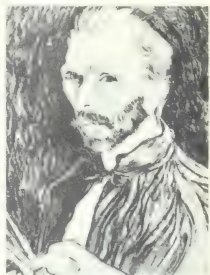


- 5. Which part of Watson's anatomy was devoured by the shark in Copley's *Watson and the Shark*?
 - a. right leg
 - b. left leg
 - c. right arm
 - d. left arm
 - e. most of the above

- 6. What is the trademark on Jasper Johns's *Ale Cans*?
 - a. Black Label
 - b. Ballantine
 - c. Miller's High Life
 - d. Schlitz
 - e. Budweiser



- 7. What is Millet's *Sower* sowing?
 - a. barley
 - b. oats
 - c. wheat
 - d. rye
 - e. millet



- 8. In what language did Vincent Van Gogh write his letters to his brother Theo?
 - a. French
 - b. Dutch
 - c. English
 - d. all three

*Don Celender is an artist and art historian living in St. Paul, Minnesota.

From a publication produced for an exhibition held at the O.K. Harris Gallery in New York. Copyright 1974 Don Celender.



9. In Velázquez's *The Maids of Honor*, the faces reflected in the mirror on the back wall are
- Princess Margarita's parents
 - Princess Margarita's pets
 - Princess Margarita's grandparents
 - Velázquez's wife and child



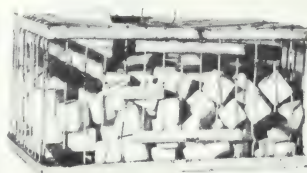
10. The bride and groom in Bruegel the Elder's *Peasant Wedding* are shown
- sitting alongside each other
 - sitting across from one another
 - walking out of the door
 - dancing in the middle of the room

11. What kind of painting is on the wall behind Whistler's *The Artist's Mother*?
- still-life
 - landscape
 - seascape
 - not clearly visible
 - Whistler's father

12. How many arrows are in the body of Mantegna's *St. Sebastian*?
- 15
 - 20
 - 24
 - 19

13. What is the name of the sprit-sail-rigged catboat in Homer's *Breezing Up*?
- Gorton
 - Gloucester
 - Barnstable
 - Seawitch
 - Liberty

14. In Michelangelo's *The Creation of Adam* God stretches His right arm to touch Adam while sheltering in His left arm
- a putto
 - Moses
 - the Virgin Mary
 - Eve
 - Mary Magdalen



15. The cubes in Duchamp's *Why Not Sneeze?* are
- wood
 - marble
 - plastic
 - cardboard
 - plaster



16. How does Lichtenstein paint his dots?
- one at a time by himself
 - his wife paints them
 - he uses a stencil
 - an assistant uses a stencil
 - they are pre-printed



17. How were the potatoes prepared in Van Gogh's *The Potato Eaters*?
- boiled
 - baked
 - Lyonnaise
 - mashed
 - hash brown

18. The nurse in Chardin's *The Tentative Nurse* is intent on opening an
- soft-boiled egg
 - hard-boiled egg
 - uncooked egg
 - 4-minute egg



19. The pillows in Ingres's *La Grande Odalisque* are stuffed with
- goose down
 - straw
 - fabric
 - foam rubber
 - chicken feathers

20. How many prongs are on the pitchfork being held by the farmer in Grant Wood's *American Gothic*?
- two
 - three
 - four
 - five
 - eight

Approximately how many steps are shown in Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase*?

- a. two
- b. five
- c. twenty-nine
- d. thirty-four



Toulouse-Lautrec's dwarfism was due to

- a. his fall from a low chair
- b. his fall into a dry ditch
- c. osteogenesis imperfecta
- d. epiphyseal dystrophy
- e. all of the above



The heels on Louis XIV's shoes in Rigaud's painting of the monarch are

- a. two inches high
- b. three inches high
- c. four inches high
- d. five inches high

24. What is the source of light in Tintoretto's *The Last Supper*?

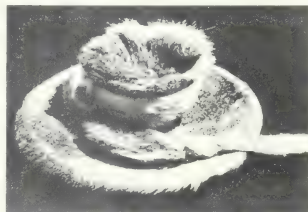
- a. oil lamp
- b. candles
- c. torches
- d. fireplace

25. What breed of horse appears in *The Horse Fair* by Rosa Bonheur?

- a. Arabian
- b. Appaloosa
- c. Palamino
- d. Clydesdale
- e. Morgan Quarterhorse

26. The buildings behind the head of the donor in the Avignon *Pietà* are in the

- a. Islamic style
- b. Italianate style
- c. Moorish style
- d. French Romanesque style
- e. French Gothic style



27. The fur lining Meret Oppenheim's *Object* is

- a. rabbit
- b. opossum
- c. mink
- d. sable
- e. Persian lamb

28. The light in Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* was rendered to depict

- a. a night scene
- b. a sunny day
- c. a cloudy day
- d. early evening
- e. early morning

29. How many lances are in Velázquez's *Surrender of Breda*?

- a. about 30
- b. about 150
- c. about 65
- d. about 80



30. Who posed for Sargent's *Madame X*?

- a. Madame Dubay
- b. Madame Gautreau
- c. Madame Soriée
- d. Madame Zola
- e. Madame Cantrell

31. The ladder in Miró's *Dog Barking at the Moon*

- a. is leaning against the moon
- b. is leaning against the sky
- c. is leaning against the dog
- d. has five rungs
- e. has eight rungs

32. What is the entrée in Caravaggio's *The Supper at Emmaus*?

- a. turkey
- b. roast beef
- c. veal cutlet
- d. chicken
- e. cod



33. Vermeer's *The Painter's Studio* bears the following signatures:

- a. Vermeer and De Hooch
- b. Vermeer and Teniers
- c. Vermeer and Rubens
- d. Vermeer and Steen

The Stove Man

A short story

by John Bart Gerald

HE HAD EMERGED from the army at twenty-seven, wifeless, childless, bearded of his youth by all who stayed at home, and so quietly angry that he didn't have a nice word for anybody.

"It looks like the war did Warren in," they said at the general store.

"Either that or the peace," the storekeeper said.

He let his beard and hair grow long. He ripped the stripes off his old fatigues, which he wore comfortably. He lived in his grandfather's house, alone.

His brother was now the town insurance broker. "Warren's okay. He's just hanging in there," his brother would say, but not unless he was asked.

Warren collected old stoves. His grandfather already had, right in the middle of the kitchen, the oldest and most beautiful wood-burning range in the county, and three more in the shed.

The family down the road had lived there 150 years. The son became an aerospace engineer. So they decided to sell and move to California. The stove was too heavy to ship, so they brought it over one afternoon and gave it to Warren.

"Just unload it to the shed," he said.

When someone married or had the kitchen

"redone," then out would go the old stove. Sometimes Warren would look to borrow a friend and a pick-up and take it away for them. He would not touch new stoves.

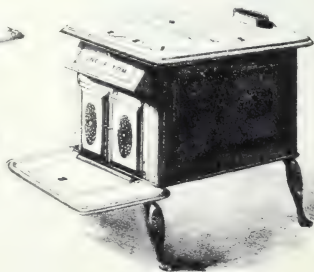
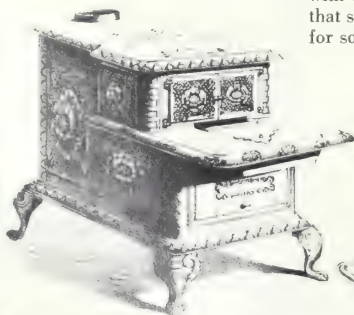
So he is sitting there in the shed keeping warm through the morning by feeding an old parlor stove with chunks from the wood pile surrounded by the best and oldest black iron in the countryside, except for the stove up in the oh-what-does-it-matter place whose family had been in those parts as long as his, pondering the history of them all, why some families were still around and others had moved away or vanished, realizing that in all their roundly ungainly flat-black elegance the stoves bear the weight of warm kitchens through the winter days of generation after generation like monuments to their families.

"What are you going to do with them?" his brother once said.

"I could always sell them out," Warren said.

Alone, he began to sand and steel-wool the rust away, and black them. He would rub up the wax with his eyes closed, over and over until he could remember the shape of those stoves in his sleep. And when one was so black it shone with its absence of light, he would set to work on the chrome fenders and handles and shine them to streaks of silver. These great black stars, these cast-iron holes in space, for several years were the only things he worked with his hands that made any sense to him that stayed in his mind and feelings like a need for someone, something, solid.

John Bart Gerald is a writer who lives in New York City and New England.



THAT WINTER Warren was seen at the movies. There was one moviehouse in that county, which remained open year-round, and only twenty miles from Warren's door. So someone from town saw him and mentioned it at the store.

"Was he alone?"

"Nossir. He was with the Murphys' daughter."

"Looks like he's warming up."

"What do you know," the storekeeper said as Warren walked in. "And speaking of the devil."

"Soap," Warren said.

"Still looking after all those stoves?" the storekeeper said, handing him the bar.

"Looking after myself," Warren said.

The stove man went home and heated up a pail of water on grandfather's black beauty. Warren fired her up good and bet the smoke was pouring from the chimney. When the water was hot he poured it in the tub and added some from a bucket of cold he kept thereby, and took a bath. He spent the afternoon out in the shed feeding a pile of roots into that parlor stove.

A trouble was socks. Warren's socks all had holes. Mostly near the toes. He could feel the freedom of his big toe through the sock, moving coldly in his boot. He thought of other things as well, that men think when alone. He thought of Murphy Girl, for that is how he thought of her. He thought of all those stoves about him and all the wood they had burned in the past hundred years. The girls from his class at school were all married or had moved to the city. Murphy Girl was thirty and worked over at the state legislature. She had everything about her in place all right.

He is opening the fire door and welcomes the heat.

Hard to say what she saw in him.

Finally he asked her home on Saturday night when snow closed the road to the moviehouse, and she said, "Sure. As long as I don't get stuck."

"Nice stove," she said, standing with hands on her hips, mid-kitchen. She didn't want a drink.

"Mind if I have one?" he said.

"Have a couple if it helps."

Then she said, "It's kind of cozy," because there was only one chair.

"Most people just sit on the bed," he said, motioning to the corner of the kitchen.

"Okay."

Warren swallowed hard half a glass of bourbon. Later on it was like some huge creature picked him up and thrust him whole into the firebox.

THIRTY YEARS OLD and she was saying, "You better make it forever now." It was still snowing outside. When Warren got up to build the fire the floor was cold under his bare feet.

In the morning she said, "You're going to have to get work you know."

"What for?" he said.

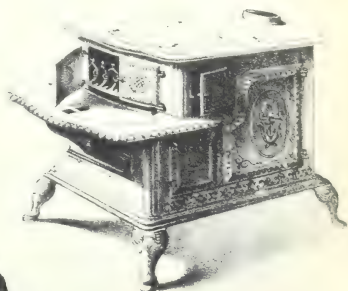
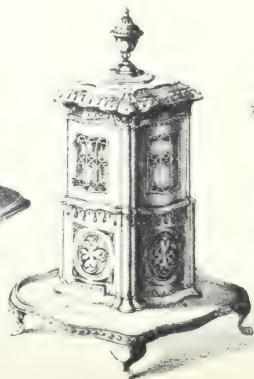
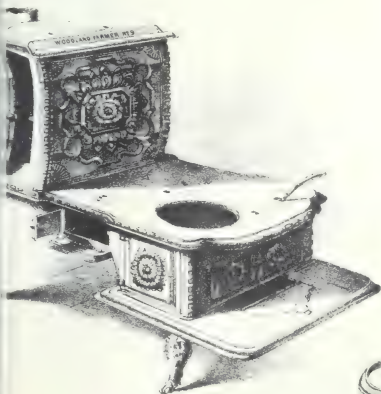
"If you want me, you do."

"What do I want to get work for?"

"Well then you better sell your stoves."

That was the year Warren went to work for the big foundry over at the state capital. It was also the year he married. But he never did sell his grandfather's stove, or any of the others. And even when they had kids in the upstairs rooms their own bed stayed in the corner of the kitchen. Saturdays, when he was through cutting wood, he would sit out in the shed by the once-parlor stove, amid his first friends, feeding in the wood chunks like pieces of his life and wondering whether it is the winners or losers who get burned. □

HARPER'S
DECEMBER 1979



FOUR POEMS

by Hilda Morley

LUCKY

Lucky we were there,
 lucky for us
 that when we got to the top of the hill
 each day
 the hot midday sun broiling us,
 we'd find that glimpse of
 the Mediterranean, bluer than possible, purpler
 & greener & we could cry out
 to each other—Thalatta, Thalatta & laugh at
 each other each time
 with the same pleasure,
 we thought
 that the Greeks must have felt,
 as Thucydides has it
 Lucky for us
 the sea could be seen from our bedroom there.
 could shine at us
 first thing in the morning,
 last at night,
 that we could see
 each evening
 the *paseo* near the port: boys & girls walking
 separately
 eyeing each other & the beautiful old men

THE SEAWEED

As if on Aran,
 like those islanders
 living on cliffs of shale,
 rocks naked
 as skulls against the wildest
 of seas,
 so unwelcoming
 that surface—outline of
 an island,
 unlikelier
 as a root-place than the sea itself
 it seems,
 like them I have no more than
 a few devices for getting
 nourishment,
 like them I have no
 choice:
 for vegetable gardens, there is
 seaweed to be
 hauled in baskets from the sea's edge—the beaky
 sides of precipices, baskets heavy enough to
 curve the back into a
 wheel-shape—to turn you
 into a wagon;
 there are also
 places where the sea-wind (or the sea itself)
 has carried seaweed to be
 deposited in cracks inside the island
 & it can be dug, dug out of the rock in handfuls:
 one can climb down into those cracks, load a basket
 there & heap it high with the blackest
 soil,
 no matter how high—the waves dash themselves
 upon the island, over it,
 flailing
 those rocks & drenching them,
 soaking
 the bare hands that dig the earth up out of
 half-hidden places,
 backs curved into wagon-shapes,
 feet trudging beneath those weights of wheels
 & wagons,
 eyes washed clean again,
 again & again, made clearer
 for searching, for the next deep place
 that has somehow been overlooked
 to be filled with earth
 for planting

they sent red roses, a dozen
 or your birthday
 (the fifth one
 since your death)
 half-opening buds, dark-red,
 exactly
 what you'd have chosen
 if you had the choice,
 to make your spirit
 mile, to give you pleasure,
 to win from you
 recognition (your eyes softened,
 your face flushed a little)
 Dark-red buds
 they opened
 steadily, without misgivings
 or excess of caution
 Only one was hesitant—
 moved them all to the light,
 so the slow one turned
 directly to the window, facing
 the light & slowly,
 the next day
 a petal lifted
 on its side, then more so,
 then another,
 then more beneath, gently pushing outward
 invisibly (so gradual the movement)
 & in the end that flower was richer, heavier &
 deeper-colored than the others, luxuriant as they were not,
more—
 not-to-be-daunted
 As the others crumpled,
 withdrew themselves,
 it held itself still open & even
 decaying filled the air with a particular
 wetness
 a royal redness

No leaf moves. The weather
hangs in a daze.

Scarcely a bird-call.

By what am I pierced?

The sharp point of
what instrument drills through me?

There was a blue short-sleeved shirt
I bought for you
one summer,

with beautiful long bone-buttons
made for frog-fastenings.

You loved & wore it till the threads showed
white from wear:

I can see nothing else but
this & the shape of your neck rising
out of the collar & your head—the oval
“of a second-century man” as Olson saw it,
& your hands
short-fingered with black hair on their backs.

Nothing
is clear to me except the smell of you
& the feel
of your skin

VULGAR, COARSE, AND GROTESQUE

Subversive books for kids

by Alison Lurie

IMAGINE AN IDEAL suburban or small-town elementary schoolyard at recess. Sunshine, trees, swings: children playing tag or jumping rope—a scene of simplicity and innocence. Come nearer; what are those nice little girls chanting as they turn the rope?

*Fudge, fudge, tell the judge,
Mama has a baby.
It's a boy, full of joy,
Papa's going crazy.
Wrap it up in toilet paper,
Send it down the elevator.*

Soon the school bell will sound and the children will file into assembly. Gazing up at the American flag on the stage, they will lift their young voices in patriotic song:

*My country's tired of me,
I'm going to Germany,
To see the king.
His name is Donald Duck,
He drives a garbage truck,
He taught me how to——,
Let freedom ring.*

Adults who have forgotten their childhood may be shocked by these verses; but anyone who has recently read *Tom Sawyer*, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, or any of a number of other classics should not be surprised. Most of the lasting works of juvenile literature are thoroughly subversive in one way or another: they express feelings not generally approved of or even recognized by grown-ups; they make fun of

honored figures and piously held beliefs; and they view social pretenses with clear-eyed directness, remarking—as in Andersen's famous tale—that the emperor has no clothes.

I am not speaking here of run-of-the-mill children's books, which in all eras, including our own, tend to support the *status quo*. Bookshops today are full of such stories, often well-told and charmingly illustrated. There are delightful picture-books in which good little bears and raccoons visit grandma or the doctor, are naughty or frightened, but are forgiven and comforted by kind, wise mummy and daddy bears or raccoons. For older children there are entertaining tales in which the (often suburban) world is temporarily disrupted by magic or by some exciting natural adventure (the escape of animals from a zoo, a flood, a robbery, and so on). Jokes are played, myste-

ries abound, crises occur; but virtue triumphs and the basic institutions of society hold firm. There is no doubt that these stories give much pleasure, but they are not the ones that will survive.

Nor, necessarily, will many of the books that win prizes for excellence: those stylistically admirable, beautifully produced volumes with their serious moral messages. Here brave and resourceful boys and girls learn to survive in the wilderness, or cope with such real-life problems as the death of parents, racial prejudice, handicapped siblings, and foster homes. I respect these books, but I have never yet met a child who listed one of them among his or her favorites, or wanted to read them over and over again. Children are not influenced by awards; they make their own choices. Over the years, with or without the help of parents, teachers,



Tenniel's Walrus and Carpenter

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and librarians, they have made no books into classics—and these books, more often than not, mock the sting order.

Mark Twain's *Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, for instance, is not the kind of story authorities of the period recommended for children. It was, in fact, itten in irritable reaction against at Twain described as "goody-goody ys" books—the improving tales that re distributed in tremendous numbers by religious and educational institutions of the time. The standard of these works was that known to klorists as "Kind and Unkind." It perhaps most familiar to laymen in Hogarth's series of prints depicting the lives of the Good and Bad Apprentices: the enterprising one practices every virtue and rises to riches and honor, while his lazy, thieving companion dies penniless.

In *Tom Sawyer* Twain deliberately nests this plot on its head. Tom lies, swears, smokes, plays hooky, wins a Sunday School prize by dudd. He ends up with a small fortune in gold, the admiration of the whole town, and the love of Becky Thatcher while his goody-goody brother Sid has been seen being literally kicked and fed out the door.

Twain's portrait of his home town, Hannibal, Missouri (which appears in the book as St. Petersburg), is equally ititious. Its adult citizens are shown vindictive, credulous, and overawed by wealth, and their most respected al institutions are empty shams. The nprance Tavern shelters thieves and outlaws, and sells whiskey in its k room. Church is a place of exiating weekly boredom where "the air always tittered and whispered all ough service" and the entire congregation is delighted when the sermon is interrupted by a yelping dog. School is n worse: the teacher is a petty tyrant who shames and beats his students, while laboriously training the re docile ones to recite bad poetry I even worse original compositions. Now, especially in 1876, did Twain away with it? Partly, of course, ause he was a genius; but partly, because, as he declared in his preface, *Tom Sawyer* was "intended mainly for the entertainment of boys and ls." that is, not to be taken seriously. *kleberrry Finn*, which was issued hout this assurance, ran into trouble

at once: it was called "vulgar" and "coarse" by critics, and banned by the Concord Library.

THE GREATEST British juvenile author of the late nineteenth century, Lewis Carroll, was just as subversive as Twain, but in a more subtle way: it is appropriate that the original title of his first children's book was *Alice's Adventures Underground*. Modern critics have tended to see Carroll's heroine as exploring the inner world of the unconscious; but it is also possible to read *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass* as underground literature in the social and political sense. The Walrus and the Carpenter can be seen as caricatures of the rival politicians Disraeli and Gladstone, deceiving and devouring the innocent oysters, or voters, but in different styles—a view supported by Sir John Tenniel's illustrations, in which the Walrus sports Disraeli's elegant dress and luxurious moustache, while the Carpenter has the square jaw and untidy clothes of Gladstone.

Even more easily, the courts of the Queen of Hearts and the Red Queen with their pompous formality and arbitrary laws of etiquette can be seen as a grotesque version of the very proper court of Queen Victoria, who also surrounded herself with extensive rose gardens and bowing courtiers. The

King of Hearts, like Prince Albert, takes second place to his consort; while the Red King and the White King, though essential to the chess game upon which *Through the Looking-Glass* is based, hardly appear at all. (Carroll, unlike most of his contemporaries, was by no means awed by Queen Victoria. After *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* had made him famous, the Queen graciously signified that he might dedicate his next book to her. Carroll followed the letter rather than the spirit of this request, which by prevailing standards was equivalent to a royal command: his next book, *Some Considerations on Determinants*, by Charles Dodgson, Tutor in Mathematics of Christ Church, Oxford, was duly inscribed to Queen Victoria. *Through the Looking-Glass*, as it should have been, was dedicated to Alice Liddell, to whom the story had originally been told.)

As one might expect from an Oxford don, the most thoroughgoing satirical attacks in *Alice* are directed at education. The Caterpillar, like a Victorian schoolmaster, asks unanswerable questions and demands that Alice repeat nonsense verses. Humpty-Dumpty, in the manner of some professors, asserts that he "can explain all the poems that ever were invented—and a good many that haven't been invented just yet." He also arranges the sense of statements to suit himself ("When I use a word . . . it means just what I choose it to mean"). The Red Queen, like a strict governess, puts Alice through a nightmare oral exam ("What's one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one and one?"). The books are full of parodies of the moral verses found in contemporary school readers, and of the rote question-and-answer method of teaching. The "regular course" of instruction followed by the Mock Turtle includes Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision, while the Gryphon goes to "the Classical master" to study Laughing and Grief—all the subjects that a child in the nineteenth century—or today—must learn in order to grow up and enter the adult world that Carroll hated.

Most radical of all at the time, though difficult to appreciate now, is the unconventional character of Alice herself. Except for her proper manners, she is by no means a good little girl in



Adventures of Tom Sawyer

mid-Victorian terms. She is not gentle, timid, and docile, but active, brave, and impatient; she is highly critical of her surroundings and of the foolish or cruel adults she meets. At the end of both books she fights back, reducing the Queen of Hearts' court to a pack of playing cards and the Red Queen to a kitten, crying "Who cares for you?" and "I can't stand this any longer!"

Both Twain and Carroll were split personalities in the social if not the technical sense of the term. As Samuel Clemens, Twain was a sentimental, bourgeois *paterfamilias*, a would-be-industrial magnate (he financed the manufacture of a typesetting machine and lost \$50,000), and a pillar of the community. Under the name of Mark Twain he was a restless adventurer and a bitterly sardonic critic of the proper world his other self inhabited. "Civilization is a shabby poor thing," he wrote, "and full of cruelties, vanities, arrogances, meanness and hypocrisies." Charles Dodgson the Oxford don was prim, devout, obsessive, and painfully shy; occasionally he even refused to accept mail addressed to Lewis Carroll, the affectionate and witty friend of little girls.

MANY OTHER AUTHORS of juvenile classics, though not so strikingly divided in personality, have had the ability to look at the world from below and note its less respectable aspects, just as little children playing on the floor can see the chewing gum stuck to the underside of polished mahogany tables and the hems of silk dresses held up with safety pins. Such writers' instinctive sympathy, like Twain's, is with the rebel, the defier of convention. Toad in Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows*, for instance, is foolish, rash, and boastful as well as incorrigibly criminal—a kind of Edwardian upper-class juvenile delinquent, with a passion for flashy clothes and fast cars. Yet at the end of the book, only slightly chastened, Toad is restored to his ancestral home and given a triumphal banquet by his friends. Grahame, who was Secretary of the Bank of England, lived a quiet and respectable life, but it is hard not to suspect that in imagination he was on the side of "Toad the motor-car snatcher, the prison-breaker, the Toad who always escapes!"

In some cases the anti-establishment message is concealed behind a screen of conventional morality that may fool adults but not their juniors and betters. Beatrix Potter, whose books owe some of their charm to the illustrations that are drawn from a child's-eye view, often appears to be recommending restraint and conformity. After his exciting adventures in Mr. McGregor's garden, Peter Rabbit is sent to bed in disgrace, while good little Flopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail have "bread and milk and blackberries for supper." But when I asked a class full of young students which character in the book they would have preferred to be, they voted unanimously for Peter, recognizing the concealed moral of the story: that disobedience and exploration are more fun than good behavior, and not really all that dangerous, whatever mothers may say.

Opinions and attitudes that are not currently in style in the adult media often find expression in children's books of the time. In the early years of this century, when Britain was going through a period of material luxury and political smugness, E. Nesbit wrote in *The Five Children and It* that "London is like prison for children, especially if their relations are not rich," and went on in a sequel, *The Story of the Amulet*, to point out that many London adults are also in prison. By magic, the Queen of Babylon is transported to Edwardian England, where four of the Five Children take her on a sightseeing tour. She adores the Tower and the Thames, but is appalled by the condition of the populace:



Kenneth Grahame's Toad

"But how badly you keep ~~four~~ slaves. How wretched and poor and neglected they seem," she said, as the cab rattled along the Mile End Road.

"They aren't slaves; they're working-people," said Jane.

"Of course they're working-people. That's what slaves are. Don't you tell me. Do you suppose I don't know a slave's face when I see it? Why don't their masters see that they're better fed and better clothed?... You'll have a revolt of your slaves if you're not careful," said the Queen.

"Oh, no," said Cyril; "you see they have votes—that makes them safe not to revolt. It makes all the difference. Father told me so."

"What is this vote?" asked the Queen. "Is it a charm? What do they do with it?"

"I don't know," said the harassed Cyril; "it's just a vote, that's all! They don't do anything particular with it."

"I see," said the Queen; "a sort of plthinging."

More recently, during World War I when "pacifist" was a dirty word, one of the more popular picture books for American children was Munro Leaf's *Ferdinand*, the story of a gentle, non-combative—though very large and strong—bull who lives in Spain. At the other bulls "would fight each other all day... butt each other and stomp each other with their horns.... But not Ferdinand." What he wants is to sit quietly under a tree and smell the flowers. Taken to the bull ring in Madrid, Ferdinand steadfastly refuses to fight and finally has to be sent home again where he lives happily ever after. (According to experts, this cheerful outcome would be unlikely in reality: insufficiently aggressive bulls are usually killed in the ring. And, of course, conscientious objectors in World War I often went to jail—but one can dream

IN SOME FAMOUS BOOKS, the subversive message operates in private rather than public lives. More often, less openly, the author takes the side of the child against his or her parents who are portrayed as at best silly and needlessly anxious, at worst selfish and stupid. In James Barrie's *Peter Pan* Mrs. Darling is charming but high-headed, while Mr. Darling is a bull and a hypocrite. Mr. and Mrs. Bank

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Working Smarter

the parents in P. L. Travers's *Mary Poppins*, are helpless and incompetent to manage their own household without their magical nanny. At the start of *Mary Poppins Comes Back*, things have got so bad that they are on the verge of separation:

"I don't know what's come over this house," Mr. Banks said. "Nothing ever goes right—hasn't for ages!... I am going!" he said. "And I don't know that I shall ever come back."

Mrs. Banks, exhausted, sits on the stairs weeping while the servants (the Bankses are only middle-class, but this is 1935) drop trays of china and set the kitchen chimney on fire and the children scream and squabble in the nursery. When their mother's misery and helplessness is called to their attention, their reaction is cool and detached:

"Children! Children!" Mrs. Banks was wringing her hands in despair. "Be quiet or I shall Go Mad!"

There was silence for a moment as they stared at her with interest. Would she really? They wondered. And what would she be like if she did?

Throughout the four volumes, it is clear that their real love and concern are for Mary Poppins.

A particularly elegant putdown of parental authority occurs in the books of A. A. Milne. In reality, Christopher Robin is a small child in a world of adults; but in *Winnie-the-Pooh* he rules over—and physically towers over—a society most of whose inhabitants are his own toys. Among them are two who seem to represent parents: Kanga, the kind, fussy mother, with her continual "We'll see, dear," and lack of interest in anything except her domestic and maternal duties; and Owl, the pompous pedant who turns out to be unable to spell his own name. As a child, Milne writes, he believed that his father, the headmaster of a boys' school, "knew everything there was to know"; but later on "I formed the opinion that, even if Father knew everything, he knew most of it wrong." Surely part of the universal appeal of the Pooh books is due to the delight any child must experience in imagining himself larger, wiser, and more powerful than the adults who surround him.

Of course, not all famous children's

books are overtly or even covertly subversive. Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Books* support the rule of law and order, though it is the law and order of the jungle: each wild beast knows its place, and the duty of Mowgli the Wolf-Cub is to learn from his elders wisdom, courage, and the skills of survival. Like the British Empire, of which Kipling was a strong supporter *The Jungle Books* created an exciting, exotic world in which properly educated men could exercise authority over the "lesser breeds without the Law." It is not by chance that Mowgli ends up as a game warden under British authority.

F. L. Baum's *Wizard of Oz* also contains no criticism of the status quo, even though Baum, as a failed South Dakota newspaper editor, must have been well acquainted with the hard times, low farm prices, and rise in freight rates that had ground down prairie families like Dorothy's. Instead, geography and climate are blamed for the fact that Aunt Em, once a "young, pretty wife," is "thin and gaunt, and never smiled, now," while Uncle Henry "worked hard from morning till night and did not know what joy was." It is true that the Wizard himself combines the appearance of a Gilded Age politician with that of a medicine-show huckster, and that in the central episode Dorothy and her friends expose him as a humbug whose powers and promises are as full of hot air as the balloon that eventually carries him back to Omaha, Nebraska. But Baum is sympathetic to his hero, who, as he says himself, is "really a very good man" though "a very bad Wizard." He allows the Wizard to give



Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are*

the Scarecrow a brain, the Tin Woodman a heart, and the Cowardly Lion courage—or rather, by a sort of benevolent hocus-pocus, to convince them that they are receiving what they already obviously have. There is a place in American society for the self-improvement merchant, even if his magic is mere hocus-pocus, Baum is telling us—a truth hundreds of entrepreneurs of wealth, health, and happiness from Dale Carnegie to Werner Erhard were subsequently to prove.

TIME AND SOCIAL CHANGE must be the revolutionary message of other children's classics. A hundred years later, *Jo's Little Women* no longer seems so radical a toymen: her untidiness, literary ambition, enthusiasm for "romps," and mild boyish slang ("Christopher Columbus!") appear tame. Girls who love Louisa May Alcott's books today tend to be more quiet, feminine, and domestic than the average; their most active peers prefer *Harriet the Spy* or *Nancy Drew*, or *Pippi Longstocking*, who can lick the circus strong man in a wrestling match. But for at least five generations of girls, Jo was a rebel and an ideal; and they found Alcott's understanding of their own impatience with contemporary models of female behavior ("I hate affected, ninnymy pinnymy chits!" as Jo puts it) nothing less than miraculous.

It is the particular gift of some writers to remain in one sense children all their lives: to continue to see the world as boys and girls see it, and take their side instinctively. One author who carries on this tradition today in America is Dr. Seuss, who like Twain and Carroll has adopted a separate literary personality (under his real name, Theodor Geisel, he has been an editorial cartoonist, advertising artist, and screenwriter). Seuss's picture books, though extremely popular with children, have yet to be recognized as classics; they are not even mentioned in many surveys of the "best" children's books. Seuss is in good company here: *The Wizard of Oz* was similarly neglected for more than fifty years and Maurice Sendak's brilliant *Where the Wild Things Are*—which suggests that children sometimes have violent aggressive impulses toward their parents—was at first condemned as "to



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frightening" (For whom? one wants to ask).

From *And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street* (1937) onward, Dr. Seuss has not only celebrated the power and richness of the child's imagination, but suggested that children may do well to conceal their flights of fancy, and possibly other things, from their elders. The boy and girl in his best-known book, *The Cat in the Hat*, shut indoors on a rainy day, completely wreck the house with the help of the devilish-looking cat, then tidy it up again just before their mother gets home to ask

"Did you have any fun?
Tell me. What did you do?"

And Sally and I did not know
What to say.
Should we tell her
The things that went on there
that day?
Should we tell her about it?
Now, what should we do?

Well...
What would YOU do
If your mother asked you?

The implication is that mother will never find out what went on in her absence—and just as well, too.

Grown-ups reading this story aloud may feel uneasy; we prefer to think of children as ingenuous and confiding. Usually, too, we like to believe that

everything is all right in our immediate world, and that the opinions and attitudes expressed in the popular media represent the full range of possible opinions and attitudes. When we go into shops before Christmas we tend to buy the new children's books that have been recommended by authorities—attractive, well-written books that though full of adventure and excitement, do not question our basic assumptions. But if we really want to please our kids—or if we want to know what they are really up to—we would do well to look at the classic children's books and listen to the rhymes being sung on school playgrounds. □

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1979

DIVERSIONS FOR CHILDREN

Vintage '79

by Selma G. Lanes

MUCH MORE THAN in adult publishing, children's books are produced with little or no heed given to what has immediately preceded them on the same subject. Thus within the past three years there have appeared three well-illustrated and intelligently written works for readers ages seven to eleven on the subject of giraffes. Any single publishing season will usually bring from two to several new number and alphabet books, similar Mother Goose collections or verse compendiums, and the same traditional tale re-illustrated by different well-known artists for different publishers. It was this characteristic surfeit of work that led the children's book illustrator Maurice Sendak, as far back as 1971 (a relatively cloudless time in juvenile publishing), to suggest to the head of the children's book section of the Library of Congress that publishers "declare a moratorium on the production of any new picture books.... Get those old books back; let the children see them. Books don't go out of fashion with children; they only go out of fashion with adults, so that kids are deprived of works of art which are no longer around, simply because new ones keep coming out."

Happily, several deserving children's

books have returned to print during 1979, welcome additions to the annual deluge of new titles. The following selections, both new and old, are offered as a guide to the caring adult who wants to make a prudent investment of limited dollars in works likely to pay a better than average spiritual return to their young recipients.

Earliest books

BOOKS FOR youngest children present the fewest problems. Preliminary in content, they succeed to the degree that they arouse and hold the listener/viewer's interest for a brief while, broadening the child's limited experience, or reinforcing some precious bits of knowledge he or she has only recently acquired and still finds enthralling. If this can be accomplished in an aesthetically pleasing manner, all the better.

An irresistible quartet on shiny, and sturdy, board pages is *Max's Toys: A Counting Book, Max's Ride, Max's First Word*, and *Max's New Suit* (Dial, 12 pages including covers, \$2.95 each), illustrated by Rosemary Wells. This popular artist's new species of dumpling-shaped rabbits, with short ears and the most expressive eyes since

Greta Garbo, romp through four wisps of full-colored mini-tales contrived to teach numbers, introduce simple words, deal with basic concepts (*up* and *down*), and show toddlers how to dress themselves. These baby books display a rare wit and intelligence and never patronize their intended infantile audience. (Ages 1-5) A charming foursome, now some twenty years old—H.A. Rey's *Anybody at Home?*, *See the Circus*, *Feed the Animals*, and *Where's My Baby?* (Houghton Mifflin, 24 pages, \$1.75 each, \$6.95 for the set in a plastic carrying case)—has been reprinted this year. Rey, best known as the creator of *Curious George*, allows his listeners to participate in the action by requiring them to unfold additional half-pages to find out where various animals live, what tricks circus performers do, which foods animals like, and where some lost animal babies are hiding. The books are printed on heavy paper between sturdily bound cardboard covers. (Ages 2-5)

Probably no book in our time has been more popular with young children than Richard Scarry's first large format encyclopedia, *Best Word Book*.

Selma G. Lanes, author of *Down the Rabbit Hole*, a collection of critical essays on children's literature, has just completed a biography of Maurice Sendak.

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Ever (Golden Press, 95 pages, \$4.95). First published in 1963 and now in its twenty-fifth printing, the book contains some 1,400 named objects likely to engage three-, four-, and five-year-olds—from various tools, boats, toys, trains, and fire-fighting equipment to tamer items found in the schoolroom, supermarket, or home. Its animal characters are bursting with an infectious vitality and purposefulness that keeps small children enthralled. Scarry, alas, received no royalties on this early work, because it was the first of its genre; the artist was then just one of a stable of illustrators used regularly by Golden for flat fees. Since then Scarry has gone on to fame and switched his allegiance to Random House, which published a number of succeeding Scarry encyclopedias—but none ever so popular as the first. This year, juvenile publishers being no less venal than other businessmen, Random has brought out a genuine rip-off by Scarry of his own most popular work. Called *Best First Book Ever* (48 pages, \$4.95), it contains only half as many words and objects as its predecessor, half as many pages, and half the lively inspiration of the artist's original effort. It is much busier and less appealing overall. On the positive side, the new work has been purged of any blatantly sexist illustrations: daddy helps clean house, and there are lady butchers, runners, rowers, and police officers. To little avail: the boy cats, dogs, pigs, and bears still seem to have most of the fun, and *Best Word Book Ever* is still the better buy by far. (Ages 3–6)

Another Scarry made a happy debut this fall—Richard's twenty-six-year-old son, Huck, who is author/artist of *Huck Scarry's Steam Train Journey* (Collins, 32 pages, \$5.95). A railroad buff since he was ten, Huck Scarry illustrates a train ride through the English countryside and across the Channel to France. En route, the British train meets its counterparts—all of them steam-powered—from different countries. The book requires a rapt reader willing to look closely at different specimens of now-defunct trains. Huck's illustrations have the same mysterious power to attract as Richard's, but they are far more realistically drawn. (Ages 4–10)

Artist James Marshall's *Mother Goose* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 40 pages, \$8.95) makes a perfect intro-

duction to the Grande Dame's repertoire for youngest listeners. Full of sunny, airy, and artfully simple pictures, the three-color volume contains some of Mother Goose's cheeriest and most lilting rhymes: "Old King Cole," "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush," and "Humpty Dumpty," among many others. (Ages 2 and up)

Novelty and toy books

THE DOLL'S HOUSE: *A Reproduction of the Antique Pop-Up Book*, by Lothar Meggendorfer (Viking, five three-dimensional settings connected by doors that open and close, \$7.95), is a wondrous nineteenth-century curiosity some four and a half feet long when fully open. Meggendorfer, a German cartoonist and puppeteer, was the father of the mechanical toy book. His ingenious movable figures and objects—like the collapsible piano, cupboard, and full dry-goods store in this 1890s work—have been faithfully recreated under the supervision of Intervisual Communications of Los Angeles. (Ages 5 and up) *Shaker Paper House*, designed by Evaline Ness (Scribners, 25 pages to cut out and color, \$8.95), has four miniature rooms that come with full furnishings, including stoves, tables, chairs, rugs—even pictures for the walls. A patient worker—child or adult—ends up with a handsome souvenir of Shaker life. (All ages) *The Children's Theatre*, by Franz Bonn (Viking, four stage sets, \$7.95), is a reproduction of an elaborate German toy book published in 1878. With one setting each from "Little Red Riding

Hood," "Hansel and Gretel," the Nativity, and Christmas Eve, the scenes are three-dimensional with four depth levels to enhance the verisimilitude. This also was engineered by Intervisual Communications. (Ages 5 and up) *Revolving Pictures*, by Ernest Nister (Collins, six revolving pictures/twelve separate scenes, \$5.95), is yet another reproduction of a toy book published in London in 1892. By slowly moving a beribboned tab from left to right along the bottom of a circular scene, the child creates an entirely new Victorian picture (e.g., "Turn the picture—Summer goes/Giving place to Winter's snows"). Again, Visual Communications. (Ages 4–9)

Reprints and revival

SIX CLASSICALLY SIMPLE and satisfying first books from the 1940s—Lois Lenski's *Big Book of Mr. Small and More Mr. Small* (Walck/McKay, 144 pages, \$8.95 each)—are newly available in two volumes of three each. Including *The Little Auto*, *The Little Train*, and *Cowboy Small*, the collections are a artful blend of simple facts and toy-town illustrations in black and white. (Ages 5–8) Back, too, in an elegantly designed new edition, is one of M. B. Goffstein's earliest and dearest little books, *Sleepy People* (1966, Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 32 pages, \$5.95). The story is of a minuscule, droopy-lidded race of people who live in old bedroom slippers and mostly smile stretch, yawn, and sleep, and the book is an inspired soporific. (Ages 3–6) Good news for M. B. Goffstein's growing number of admirers is the fact that seven of her earliest works—*The Gats*, *Sleepy People*, *Brookie and Her Lamb Across the Sea*, *Goldie the Dollmaker*, *Two Piano Tuners*, and *Me and My Captain*—are now available in a well-designed paperback, *M. B. Goffstein: The First Books* (Avon, 167 pages, \$6.95) (All ages) Also back is *Diana and her Rhinoceros* (Oxford, 32 pages, \$8.95), by veteran English illustrator Edward Ardizzone. With as artful a blend of full color and black-and-white illustrations as is likely to be found, this decidedly British tale tells of Diana Effingham-Jones, a small girl who befriends a passing rhinocero by curing its cold and feeding it "ho-



Sleepy People

uttered toast." The two remain firm friends for life and, if the author can be trusted, are still taking nightly walks on a "Queens Road, Richmond, Surrey, England." (Ages 4-8) *The Story of the little Round Man*, by Alice and Angela Warne, 80 pages, \$6.95, is a curiosity written and illustrated by two young English ladies some fifty years ago, and read since only to their children, grandchildren, and assorted friends. The work is now available to us all. Full of bright, childlike pictures and fresh turns of phrase, it is amateur in many respects—its length for one—but joins a suspenseful tale of a miser ordered to choose between his wealth and his beloved little round dog. (Ages 6-8)

1979's best picture books

IT'S DIFFICULT to imagine a more beautiful or satisfying picture book than *Ox-Cart Man*, by Donald Hall, with pictures by Barbara Cooney (Viking, 40 pages, \$8.95). Cooney is a supreme colorist. She juxtaposes bright French blues, cabbage and rich teal greens, and aqua with remarkable effect. The story, about a New Hampshire farmer who takes his family's harvest and handiwork to market in faraway Portsmouth, is told simply and straightforwardly. The hero's month-long trek allows Cooney to give the listener/viewer splendid vistas of the New England countryside in its autumn-leaf panoply. Subtly, her painted season mellows to brown as the farmer's return trip nears its end. Both text and pictures illuminate the admirable frugality of rural life in this country 150 years ago. A genuine bit of Americana. (Ages 5-9)

An obscure sidelight on musical history is the subject of David Lasker's *He Boy Who Loved Music*, illustrated by Joe Lasker, his father (Viking, 8 pages, \$9.95). When Prince Nicolaus Esterhazy keeps his court musicians playing at his sumptuous summer palace well into autumn, his musical director, Joseph Haydn, undertakes to drop him a delicate musical hint about the players' homesickness. Artist Joe Lasker's illustrations, an unlikely marriage of comic strip and trench romantic art, communicate the aristocratic charm of high life in eighteenth-century Hungary. (Ages 6-8)

There has never been a more complete, one volume geographic reference. THE INTERNATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC ENCYCLOPEDIA AND ATLAS goes far beyond the old geographic dictionaries to provide the latest information about every place in the world from Aachen, West Germany to Zyrow, Poland.

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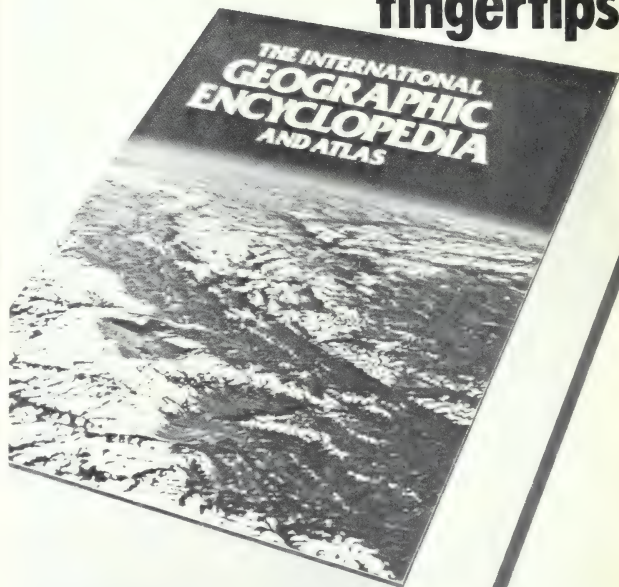
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Anno's *Animals*, by Mitsumasa Anno (Collins, 32 pages, \$7.95), is a unique work by a gifted Japanese artist whose eyes are ever open to new graphic possibilities. As always in Anno's work, the child is cajoled into using his own eyes sharply. Here the trick is to find a host of hidden animals, birds, and insects concealed in a series of seductive green landscapes. To prove that his audience's eye is sharper by the end of the book, Anno closes by repeating the illustration that opened it. Lo! There is something there that the child-viewer doubtless missed entirely the first time round. A challenging book. (All ages)

In *One-Eyed Jake* (Greenwillow, 32 pages, \$7.95), the talented English illustrator Pat Hutchins tells the tale of a no-good pirate sea captain. Greedy and cruel, he terrorizes his three-man crew. How this rotter of a buccaneer, inadvertently, helps his men escape—and at the same time does himself in—is the subject of this salty comedy. (Ages 4–8)

Louise Mathew's *Gator Pie* is a modest tale with an easy-to-swallow lesson in fractions, with pictures by Jeni Bassett (Dodd, Mead, 32 pages, \$6.95). When Alvin and Alice, two alligator fledglings, discover an abandoned pie, they plan to divide it in two and devour it. But, alas, older and stronger alligators keep appearing to demand an equal slice. When Alice manages finally to cut one hundred infinitesimal slivers, the interlopers all fight over which bit is biggest. Alvin and Alice get the pie after all. (Ages 3–7)

Chris van Allsberg's first children's book, *The Garden of Abdul Gassazi* (Houghton Mifflin, 32 pages, \$8.95), is handsome in a spooky way. Its author/illustrator, a surreal sculptor and graphic artist, employs only a carbon pencil to achieve subtle variations of light, shadow, and texture. Though art surely overpowers text, van Allsberg's story—about a small boy and a perverse bull terrier who enters the forbidden garden of Abdul Gassazi, retired magician—has a charm and originality of its own. (All ages)

Two handsome retellings of Andersen fairy tales are Lorinda Bryan Cauley's *Ugly Duckling* (Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 32 pages, \$8.95 hardcover, \$3.50 paper) and Amy Ehrlich's *Thumbelina*, illustrated by

Susan Jeffers (Dial, 32 pages, \$8.95). Cauley gives her readers a real barnyard filled with the chatter of ducks, geese, and chicks. Her water lilies, reeds, and, particularly, villainous hunting dog that terrifies the duckling here are so closely observed and feelingly rendered as to seem almost alive. Jeffers has used fine-line pen and ink to highlight her subtle color dyes applied over detailed pencil drawings, which were then erased. The effect is both delicate and sharp. Her *Thumbelina* has many near-magical moments. (Ages 6–10) (Ungrateful as it seems, I wonder if this overpowering dominance of art—even good art—is necessarily a wise thing in works where strong and evocative prose could itself carry more weight and leave more to the child's imagination.)

Each Peach Pear Plum, by Janet and Allan Ahlberg (Viking, 32 pages, \$8.95), has the distinction of being the most expensive unjacketed picture book of the year. A pleasing marriage of text and art, its nursery-rhyme and storybook characters—Tom Thumb, Mother Hubbard, et cetera—are joined in a new verse that provides young audiences with the clue needed to discover who's hiding in every full-color picture. Children are sure to rise eagerly to the Ahlbergs' cheery and clever challenge. (Ages 4–8)

For slightly older children, there is *Spot's Dogs and the Alley Cats* by Robin and Jocelyn Wild (Lippincott, 32 pages, \$4.95), a shiny board-covered book in full-color and a British import. Its quartet of slapstick adventures in near-comic-book format concerns a bumbling quintet of good-natured dogs menaced by a slyboots foursome of unsavory cats. The simple narrative beneath each picture is augmented by balloons within. (Ages 6–10)

Frank Modell, a veteran *New Yorker* cartoonist, has turned out a sweet, old-fashioned soufflé in *Seen Any Cats?* (Greenwillow, 32 pages, \$6.95). Two pals, eager to get to the real circus, stage a small circus benefit for themselves starring "live animal acts." For this purpose, they round up the smartest cats in the neighborhood for a crash training program. A wordless double page of dyspeptic felines flatly refusing to do their tricks is the funniest of many funny moments in this genial book. (Ages 4–8)

Parents of television addicts should

welcome Stephen Manes's *The Boy Who Turned Into a TV Set*, with funky drawings by Michael Bass (Coward McCann, Geoghegan, 32 pages, \$6.95). Young Odgen Pettibone opens his mouth one evening to find himself spouting television commercials. Surprisingly, when he lifts his T-shirt, his stomach is glowing and the six o'clock news is on in living color. Modern medicine has no cure, so his parents a practical pair, use him as a substitute for the family set, out for repairs (Ages 5–9)

Nonfiction

OUT OF AN exceptionally large number of informational books published this year, the following are recommended for their lively subject matter and overall quality of text and art. *The Lighthouse Book*, by Michael Berenstain (McKay, 32 pages, \$6.95), offers clear illustrations and well-selected facts about famous lighthouses, their lenses and their keepers. (Ages 5–9)

Aliki's *Mummies Made in Egypt* (Crowell, 32 pages, \$8.95) provides a lucid text capable of answering any child's questions about the embalming of mummies (a long process, taking seventy days) and the decorating of tombs. The illustrations, adapted from Egyptian paintings and sculptures, are a handsome accompaniment. (Ages 7–11) *Andrés Segovia: My Book of the Guitar*, by Andrés Segovia and George Mendoza (Collins, 64 pages, \$9.95), is a large-format beginner guide to the classical guitar by today's preeminent master of the instrument. Included are handsome photographs of the maestro playing and offering instruction, and several simple pieces selected by him. (Ages 7 and up)

Easy readers galore

THE EASY-READER CRAZE began when Dr. Seuss published his jaunty *Cat in the Hat* as a Random House Beginner Book back in 1956. Since then, other houses have followed with I-Can-Read, Easy-to-Read, Ready-to-Read, Read Alone, and Reading-on-My-Own Books, among others. I'm happy to report that Dr. Seuss himself

still being strong at age seventy, his latest title being *Oh Say Can ou Say?* (Beginner Books/Random, 8 pages, \$3.50), his merriest nonsense book in many a moon. This collection of original tongue twisters begins with its own best review: "Said a book-reading parrot named Hooey/The words in this book are all phooey/When you say them your lips/will make slips and ack flips/and your tongue may end p in St. Looney!" Well, it will be worth the trip. (Ages 5-9)

The weakness of many easy readers is a tendency for the language to sound re-chewed. Not so with Arnold obel's *Frog and Toad* books. His fourth collection, *Days with Frog and Toad* (I-Can-Read/Harper & Row, 64 pages, \$5.95), contains five stories as good as his best, including a delicious shivery ghost story. (Ages 4-8) Another easy reader that flows gracefully is Clyde Robert Bulla's *Daniel's Duck*, with pictures by Joan Sandin (I-Can-Read/Harper & Row, 64 pages, \$5.95). Set in the mountains of Tennessee, it tells of a stubborn young boy who carves his first sculpture—a duck—out of wood. Ignoring all advice, he makes it as he sees it in his mind's eye—with unexpected results. (Ages 4-8) Part of a new reading series is Jean Holzenthaler's *My Feet Do*, with photographs by George Ancona (A Fat Cat Book/E. P. Dutton, 32 pages, \$5.95). Though the age range of titles will vary widely, this one is for a precocious pre-reader eager to graduate into literacy. (Ages 4-6)

Older fiction of note

BY FAR THE MOST imaginative piece of fiction in 1979 is *Presto*, or the *Adventures of a Turnspit Dog*, written and illustrated by Marilynne K. Roach (Houghton Mifflin, 148 pages, \$7.95). A tour-de-force re-creation of eighteenth-century London in terms a young reader will both understand and enjoy, the tale is told by a small dog with the nerviable job of running continuously in a turnspit cage. (This keeps a pint of beef roasting evenly over the open hearth in the inn where he is employed.) A change of fortune comes with the appearance of a young puppeteer who gives him his name and trains him to be a London street per-

former. Presto's picaresque adventures bring him briefly into contact with such notables of his age as Samuel Johnson and Horace Walpole. A beautifully told suspense tale of unusual breadth and depth. (Ages 10-14)

E. L. Konigsburg's *Throwing Shadows* (Atheneum, 151 pages, \$8.95) is a collection of five first-rate short stories, "With Bert and Ray" and "The Catchee" being my particular favorites. The general theme is teenagers' taking the world's measure and finding their own place in the scheme of things, but each story has a milieu, protagonist, and flavor all its own. By the author of *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*. (Ages 10-14)

The Disappearance, by Rosa Guy (Delacorte, 24 pages, \$7.95), is the fourth novel by this gifted West Indian author, who writes with rare understanding about young American blacks, both the have-nots and the haves. Her

hero, Imamu Jones (born John Jones), has just been acquitted of a murder he didn't commit and is released in the custody of a Brooklyn middle-class black family, the Aimsleys. When the family's younger daughter disappears, it is Imamu that Mrs. Aimsley immediately suspects. The hero's anger and hurt lead him to the realization that his salvation lies not with the Aimsleys of the black world, but in taking responsibility for what little in life is his—a drunken mother and a ramshackle Harlem apartment he can neither forget nor abandon. (Ages 12 and up)

All told, it was an expensive year in children's book publishing—the astute reader will have noticed that prices are higher than ever before—but, fortunately, the ratio of good books to dreary dross was higher than ever, too. □

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1979

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**Tom Wolfe
The
Right
Stuff**



Photo by Nancy Crampton

WOMEN WHO WRITE

Of enclosure and escape

by Frances Taliaferro

The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination, by Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar. 719 pages. Yale University Press, \$25.

SHOULD THE common reader bother with literary criticism? Life is short and art is long; it's difficult enough to tend to the writers, let alone the scholiasts, those learned commentators who annotated ancient manuscripts with their hearts' thin blood. "Literary criticism"? Images of desiccation creak to mind: dry leaves aflutter in the carrel, dry bones aclacking in the charnel houses of Western literature, where the only good writer is a dead one.

The common reader shudders. The common reader is, after all, an amateur: he is drawn by love and not by duty. His affections are freely given and withdrawn; splendidly disinterested, he need not write a paper on his discoveries, dazzle a class, or confound a rival scholar. He reads what he damn pleases.

Once there was a sixteen-year-old reader who loved E. M. Forster and had gobbled—she thought—all his novels. Just before a long trip, she dashed into her mother's library for something to read on the train and grabbed a Forster novel unknown to her. It had a wonderfully Forsterian title—*Lionel Trilling*—and she looked forward to it as to a feast. When she opened it on the train, she found it Dead Sea fruit. With the memory of that dreary railroad car and those

clear, dry pages, it was years before she could bring herself to read a critical essay for pleasure.

She was callow and foolish, but perhaps she may be forgiven her desire for a real story about the adventures of Lionel. Forster himself observed that "we are all like Scheherazade's husband, in that we want to know what happens next. Some of us want to know nothing else—there is nothing in us but primeval curiosity, and consequently our literary judgments are ludicrous." Indeed, our status as common readers gives us the right to continue in curiosity and shameless imbalance, free from the strictures of the academy.



But if we have even a small interest in our own growth, there are some literary experiences we should not refuse: to avoid them would be to remain stunted. For some of us lucky enough to have missed reading classics when we were too young to value them, Plato or Racine or Donne may now provide such experiences. Not often, but from time to time, a work of criticism appears that may provoke with the same energy, that may turn our reading in side out and back again, to stitch up in truer shape than before. I found such an experience in reading *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination*.

THE AUTHORS, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, are associate professors of English at the University of California at Davis and Indiana University respectively. Perhaps they are smiling at the designation "author." Their very first line asks, "Is a pen a metaphorical penis?" Men think so, and for centuries "authorship" has been the "authority" of the man of letters who is, like God the Author of Being, "a father a master or ruler, and an owner: the spiritual type of a patriarch." In the house of literature are many mansions. They are the forms and genres of his devising, the architecture of a masculine world.

Frances Taliaferro writes the "In Print" column in monthly alternation with Jeffrey Burke.

Historically, women who have dared write have found themselves trapped not only in the straitness of society but also in the strict enclosures of patriarchal literature. The Western tradition—a splendid patrimony for the men who are its heirs. For women, however, there has been no linear inheritance from female ancestors who might have given them some sense of a common past and a possible artistic future.

There is a "sequential historical relationship between literary artists," as

Harold Bloom's explanation of the oedipal struggle in which an artist betrays himself by invalidating his literary "father," then what hope is there for women—without artistic ancestry they can call their own—to define and realize themselves as artists?

Gilbert and Gubar propose that the paradigm of the Oedipal struggle is appropriate to the female writer. Her self-definition is in the search for anxiety rather than in its repudiation. When she finds them, her female precursors, "far from representing a retreating force to be denied or killed, [she] prove[s] by example that a revolt against patriarchal literary authority is possible." And invigorating: the intense creativity of women writers in recent years deserves comparison to the fertility of the Renaissance.

It's about time. For the women writers of the nineteenth century lived unsilently with their creativity: even our best visions of them are true in spirit, and they are visions of conformity and confinement. Jane Austen, silently hiding her manuscript in a corner of the drawing room, was ostensibly that "angel in the house" whose image so gladdened the Victorians, though Gilbert and Gubar make clear just how subversive a writer she was.

Charlotte Brontë, on the other hand, the novelist to whom women must look for overt and energizing anger. At the same time, though, she was, as Arnold, who may have been patriarchal but was certainly not obese, wrote of Brontë that her "mind contains nothing but hunger, rebellion and rage." *Jane Eyre* is central to the argument of Gilbert and Gubar partly because it is "a story of enclosure and escape," of Jane's self-realization against all the odds presented by a patriarchal society. But most important is the figure of Bertha Rochester, the very type of the madwoman in the at-

tic, who represents all Jane's imprisoned "hunger, rebellion and rage." She is Jane's "truest and darkest double"; she is also Brontë's.

The authors argue that in the process of revising patriarchal images of what a woman is meant to be, nineteenth-century women writers "almost obsessively" project "the energy of their own despair into passionate, even melodramatic characters," doubles who embody and act out the author's rage. In burning down the house of her master, Bertha Rochester does only what Charlotte Brontë might wish to do. Certifiable madwomen may not seem to abound in Victorian novels and poetry, but we must remember that in patriarchal orthodoxy, any woman was considered mad who sought to express autonomy of any kind, in deed or word. With this thought in mind, it is exciting to make one's way through the century with Gilbert and Gubar, focusing on the works of Mary Shelley, Austen, the Brontës, George Eliot, and several women poets, especially Emily Dickinson. The others

secreted bitter self-portraits of madwomen in the attics of their novels, [but] Emily Dickinson herself became a madwoman—became . . . both ironically a madwoman (a deliberate impersonation of a madwoman) and truly a madwoman (a helpless agoraphobic, trapped in a room in her father's house).

THIS REMARKABLE BOOK may not rouse scholars to the exhilaration felt by the common reader, only because many scholars will have read parts of the argument already in learned journals and smaller works of criticism. For the amateur who encounters it all at once, for the first time, this book is a plunge into a new and bracing element. The authors have an encyclopedic command of literature and a particularly generous respect for their colleagues (and some "precursors") in feminist criticism. Their summa is deeply scholarly, but it is also elegant and vigorous. I came to it expecting to be stunned by learning; I read it in a state of sustained excitement because it offered a new way of seeing.

Most bracing for me was the discovery of two new heroines: Liliith and the Wicked Queen, Snow White's

stepmother. The tradition of centuries has shown us Liliith as the femme fatale who preceded Eve in Adam's affections and was edited out of the Bible. The authors argue that Liliith's "crime" was not her sexual temptation of Adam but her rebellion: she refused to lie beneath him, angrily spoke the Ineffable Name, and flew away to an eternity of demonic practices on the edge of the Red Sea. For the authors, "what her history suggests is that in patriarchal culture, female speech and female 'presumption' are inextricably linked and inevitably daemonic." The articulate woman is viewed as a monster; Adam's legitimate wife is the postlapsarian, submissive Eve.

In the same way, readers have traditionally identified with docile, good Snow White—the "angel in the house"—and feared her stepmother. Gilbert and Gubar ask us to consider the executive and creative energy of the "mad, self-assertive Queen"—"mad" because she is self-assertive, because she is able to stop listening to the patriarchal pronouncements of the mirror on the wall and invent action for herself. Snow White accepts the lessons of submissive femininity and becomes "a house-keeping angel in a tiny house" and a beautiful object in a glass coffin. The Queen, the autonomous woman who will not submit, pays for her autonomy by bearing the name of witch, and dances herself to death in the fiery shoes of art.

In the glare of archetypes like these, the close arguments of the academy seem pale and inadequate. For all their scholarly brilliance—in particular, the section on "whiteness" that makes terrifying sense of Emily Dickinson—Gilbert and Gubar are most powerful when they speak to the heart and not to the brain. There is as much compassion in *The Madwoman in the Attic* as there is anger.

Should men read this book? Well, maybe. If good criticism is a dialogue between writer and reader, should men enter into conversation with autonomous women? Some men should not, and will ever prefer the dwarves' housekeeper to the inventive Queen. Others will find that the most pleasurable intercourse, both sexual and conversational, is that of equal partners. They are the common readers for whom this book is meant. □

OTHER THINGS BEING EQUAL

by David Suter

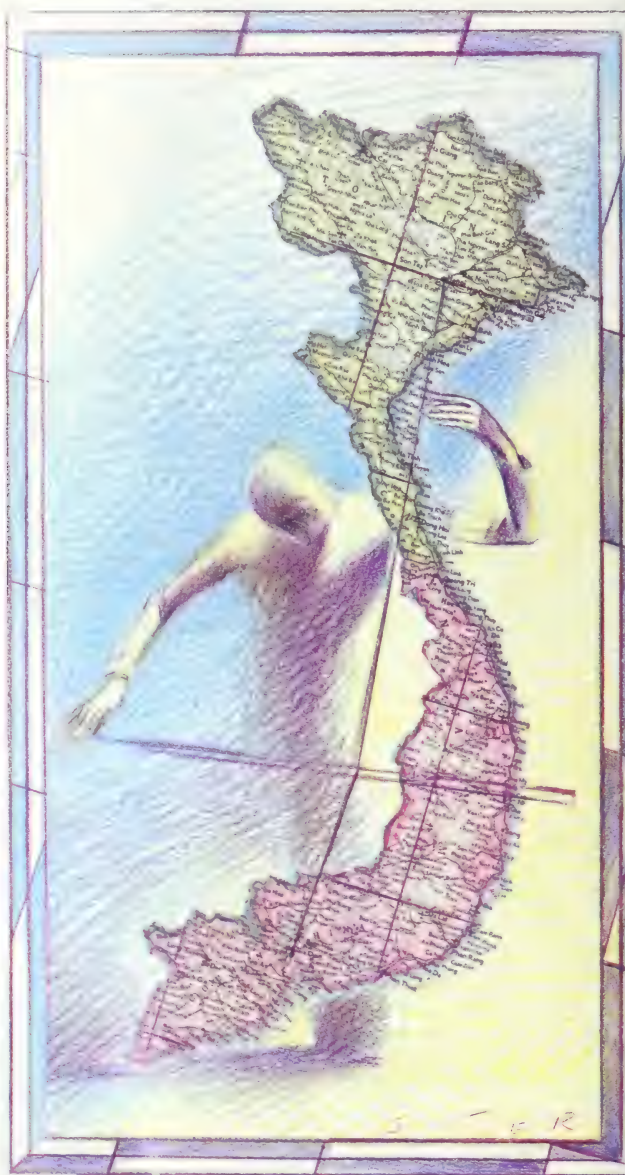
Final Solution

The famous Four-Color-Map problem asked if it was possible to prove that four colors suffice to shade the map so that no contiguous states have the same color. The proof, found just last year, required many hours of computer time and is thus considered somewhat inelegant.

A related theorem, the Three-Color-Map problem, suggests that even fewer colors are needed to complete the map if each state is allowed either to "invade" and change the color of its neighbor, or to change its own color.

If adjacent states are yellow, for instance, one state may declare itself red in order to invade the other; on the other hand, the latter may resist the invasion by turning red first—an "insurrection," as it is called in Tricolor theory.

Readers who follow the problem to its conclusion will find that eventually one color is driven completely off the map and into the "ocean," a region whose color does not change. Mathematicians consider this an elegant, if hard-won, "final solution" to the Tricolor problem.



KINGSFIELD'S FOLLY

the death of "The Paper Chase"

by John Houseman

My favorite among all the proposed new shows for the 1978-79 series was "The Paper Chase," a top-quality adaptation from the motion picture, starring John Houseman in his Academy-winning role. . . . This was clearly an outstanding program in every way, serious and yet witty, pertinent to our times, heart-warming, mature, believable.

—William S. Paley, Chairman, CBS

"The Paper Chase" is dead. What might have been the most intellectually stimulating dramatic series presented on television during the 1970s has been buried by CBS. . . . In a typical case of corporate duplicity, it turned out that while CBS was bragging itself into a frenzy of publicity over the series, it was doing everything possible to torpedo it.

—Garry Deeb, Chicago Tribune

PROFESSOR KINGSFIELD entered my life in the fall of 1972 and changed it completely. He appeared without warning, disrupted the academic calm into which I withdrawn, and threw me back, or I knew what had happened, into a whirlpool of show business.

The main agent of this transformation was a young man named James Bridges, a native of Paris, Arkansas, whom I first met in Los Angeles in the early Sixties. Barely out of his teens, had written a play about life in nice, California, that had been performed in one of the many small theaters that were springing up at the time all over Hollywood. I found his play original and interesting and asked to meet him. He was eager to learn more about the theater and asked if I would join the Professional Theater Group of the University of California, which I was artistic director. Start-

ing as a coffee-bearer and third assistant stage manager, he soon became a close personal friend and one of the most valuable members of our organization.

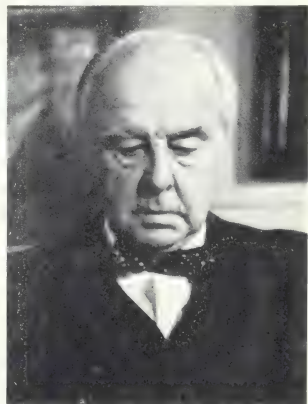
When I settled in New York four years later to set about creating the drama division of the Juilliard School, Bridges and I continued to communicate regularly—mostly through late-night phone calls. He had finally achieved his dream of writing and directing a film of his own, *The Baby Maker*; immediately he had started casting about for another. After more than a year he had come upon a modest project known as *The Paper Chase*, based on a first novel by John Osborn, a recent graduate of Harvard Law School.

My wife was alone in our house in New York one night when Bridges called from California with an astonishing question: How would John feel about playing the part of *Paper Chase*'s Professor Kingsfield, a distinguished and formidable curmudgeon in his sixties, a senior professor of contract law

vaguely based on the historic Harvard Law School figure "Bull" Warren? Her reply was that only I could answer that question. When he called again the next morning I told him (though I had never, for one moment, thought of myself as an actor) that I'd be delighted. I also warned him that if he made such a lunatic suggestion to his studio he stood an excellent chance of being thrown off the picture.

Fifteen months later I was flown to Los Angeles to appear at the Chandler Pavillion for the presentation of the Academy Awards. According to Nick the Greek I had a slight edge in the betting over Robert de Niro and Vincent Gardenia for the Best Supporting Actor of 1973.

In accepting my Oscar I gave thanks to my fellow actors, to Gordon Willis, whose dramatic cinematography had made me look more impressive than I was, and to my director, James Bridges, for his courage in entrusting such a wonderful role to "an obscure and aging schoolmaster."



FOR THE NEXT three years I continued to run the drama division of the Juilliard School and to perform variations of Professor Kingsfield in films and television. I was head of the CIA in *Three Days of the Condor* and the suave, ruthless executive of a futuristic global corporation in *Rollerball*. I was flown to Stockholm to film a commercial for Volvo automobiles, and I flew to Hamburg to play Winston Churchill for Hallmark in a television film about the

John Houseman's second volume of memoirs, *Front and Center*, was published last month by Simon & Schuster. Since Mr. Houseman wrote this article, the Public Broadcasting Service has announced that it will show "The Paper Chase," both reruns and new productions, beginning in the fall of 1980.

Potsdam Conference.

In all that time no one seemed to have thought of recycling *The Paper Chase* for television. For a few weeks in the winter of 1976, Twentieth Century-Fox, which had made the film, considered it as the possible basis for a thirty-minute situation comedy. Since neither Bridges nor I was willing to consider it in that form, the idea was abandoned. Instead, we came up with our own plan for an hour-long dramatic series. NBC, the first network approached, gave Fox an order for a sample script, which Jim Bridges wrote between pictures—based on a legendary Harvard Law School incident suggested by Osborn. NBC delayed, then lost interest in the project; CBS picked it up and ordered a pilot. I was engaged to repeat my role of Professor Kingsfield and to hold myself available for six months while the network decided if it wished to proceed with the series.

In October we filmed the pilot—mostly on the Fox lot in Century City, with Bob Thompson as producer and Joseph Hardy as director. Kingsfield's hurriedly constructed classroom set was a reduced replica of Harvard's Langdell Hall; we used the campus of the University of Southern California for our exteriors; for our dormitory we used an abandoned wing of the Queen of the Angels Hospital in downtown Los Angeles. Our film was edited, scored, recorded, and sent over to CBS for approval—one of the 150 pilots ordered annually by the networks at a cost of between \$300,000 and \$400,000 for an hour, \$200,000 to \$300,000 for a half-hour show. The first reaction to the "Paper Chase" pilot was one of unqualified approval.

In the weeks that followed—as more and more people got to see it—word spread that it was the best dramatic pilot of the season. It was also reported that the two CBS executives in charge of programming were dead set against it. (An experienced and cynical friend explained to me that this was the kind of show that network executives most feared and detested: too "good" for popular appeal and not "bad" enough to dump in a hurry, it would hang like an albatross around their necks, a dead weight and an encumbrance in their race for the "ratings.") There was further confusion when word came from an authoritative source that

William Paley, the powerful chairman of CBS, loved the pilot.

Four months later we learned to our delight that "The Paper Chase" was included in the CBS program schedule for the fall. We didn't learn until the next day, when the fall schedules were formally announced in the press, that "The Paper Chase" would be aired on Tuesdays at 8:00 P.M.—opposite ABC's "Happy Days" and "Laverne and Shirley"—in what was known throughout the industry as "The Death-Slot" or "Murderers' Row."

To appreciate the dimness of our future in "Murderers' Row" the reader must be informed that, for two years, ABC's "Happy Days" and "Laverne and Shirley" had completely dominated the airwaves between the hours of eight and nine on Tuesday evenings. The average Nielsen rating of these two successive half-hour sit-coms had been between 25 and 35, with a "share" of between 40 and 50 percent of the viewing audience. In other words, while those two shows were on the air, less than one-half of America's total viewing public was left available for all other stations—including those of CBS, NBC, public television, ethnic, and other local and independent broadcasters.

FINANCIALLY these figures are of overwhelming importance. Commercials aired during prime time (between 8:00 and 11:00 P.M.) cost the advertiser as much as \$200,000 for sixty seconds—with seven minutes of every hour devoted to advertising. Rates are computed on a cost-per-thousand basis determined by estimating how many million persons are watching a particular show at a particular time. Such estimates are known as "ratings," and their main supplier is the A. C. Nielsen Company, which delivers to its clients overnight computations of audiences in major cities followed, the next day, by a more complete and detailed national survey. These figures are awaited with frantic impatience by networks, producers, and advertisers alike, for they form the basis of American commercial broadcasting.

A highly rated show does more than triumph during its own airing; it pulls up the network's entire weekly rating and enables it to command a higher

across-the-board price for air time. In contrast, a low-rated show (no matter how high its quality or how much it critically admired) pulls down the network's standing and reduces the price it can command from advertisers on the basis of a guaranteed number viewers.

Each point in the Nielsen index represents 750,000 households, which in turn, represent roughly 1.5 million people. (A comedy show or one that known to appeal to children is credited with 2.2 viewers per set; news or "heavy" shows, which are supposed avoided by children, rate 1.7.) Thus spread of a dozen points in the Nielsen rating means a difference of between 15 and 20 million potential clients for the advertiser. This spread is directly reflected in the earnings of the networks: a loss in rating can affect network's profits to the tune of \$50-\$100 million dollars a year—not mention loss of executive prestige and the long-term damage suffered by the defection of "affiliated" television stations that tend to gravitate to a more highly rated rival network. How all these all-important figures arrived at? What is this system that all parties concerned (including the press) see as willing and eager to accept?

The Nielsen index is arrived through a mechanism that is awesome in its simplicity. It is based on the reading of 1,200 boxes installed in homes in various parts of the country. Each of these homes is selected at random (much is made of this) from one of the population units into which the United States has been divided. Thus these 1,200 daily samplings are supposed to represent a total of 100 million households from which an extrapolated the tastes and viewing habits of the entire nation. To question their accuracy is to attack the entire structure of commercial television; it is a subversive attempt to rock the boat and to kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. How golden these eggs may be judged from the recent balance sheets of all three of the networks.

THE FIRST RATINGS for "The Paper Chase" were predictably low. For our opening show, which was aired on Friday with considerable promotion

For eight years, the story of his life was the history of our times.

He was at the center of every important event throughout one of the century's most turbulent and crucial eras. His actions have been reported and analyzed in every medium and in every language of the world. Here at last, from the most highly placed source of all, is the first segment (covering from 1968 to 1973) of Henry Kissinger's own account of the passage of history that he shaped. Comprehensive in scope and rich with anecdote, WHITE HOUSE YEARS is graced by the Kissinger touch—the quick humor, striking candor and penetrating insight that have left their

mark on everyone who has dealt with him. Though it will be searched for evidence by those seeking both to praise and to blame its author, WHITE HOUSE YEARS is no narrow brief for the defense. It is a profound and fascinating work of history by a highly qualified historian—who also happened to be uniquely placed to observe key events. Long after the controversy surrounding Dr. Kissinger's actions has died down, his book will be read as a major source on the diplomacy of the modern world.

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fanfare, we received a national rating of 13 with a 27 percent share of viewers. The following Tuesday, on our first appearance in our regular 8:00 P.M. death slot against "Happy Days" and "Laverne and Shirley," we were down to 11.3 with a share of 19 percent. There we remained with minor fluctuations for the next three months, as compared with ABC's average rating of more than 20 with a 40 to 45 percent share. In other words, "The Paper Chase" was being watched in some 8.5 million households, "Happy Days" and "Laverne and Shirley" in about 15 million.

These figures should have surprised no one, yet a deep gloom enveloped the studio when it was realized that we were being watched by less than 15 million people as against ABC's 30 million. This depression was only slightly relieved by our great reviews, by far the best received by a new series of this or any other recent season. Two dozen of these were reprinted with full-page advertisements that CBS took out in a number of the nation's leading newspapers.

While this lavish praise had no perceptible effect on the show's ratings, it did succeed in making us all feel a little less unhappy. For as time approached for the ordering of the second half of the series, it seemed inconceivable that CBS would yank us off the air immediately after so much boasting. Early in December the network authorized Fox to go on producing "The Paper Chase" until further notice. They never formally exercised their option for a second set of twelve shows, but we continued to produce shows from week to week until the end of the season.

So strong was the normal television pattern of low ratings automatically followed by cancellation and banishment that our survival was treated as hot news in every television column in the country.

"PAPER CHASE STAYS," reported the *New York Times*; we became "The show that Nielsen couldn't kill"; we were described as "eluding the Nielsen axe" and "breaking the law of TV." None of this had the slightest effect on our ratings.

In late January CBS suddenly moved us out of the "graveyard." The show was switched from 8:00 P.M. Tuesday to 10:00 P.M., where we were no

longer up against "Happy Days" and "Laverne and Shirley" but opposite "Starsky and Hutch" on ABC and movies on NBC. Unfortunately the move was made following several preemptions, with virtually no announcement or notice, so that many of the regular viewers we had managed to collect at 8:00 P.M. thought we were off the air.

For our first two 10:00 P.M. shows our Nielsen showed little change. Then in our third and fourth weeks there was a perceptible rise—particularly in our big-city ratings. It is idle to surmise what might have happened if we had been allowed to remain in that spot; early in March, following two more preemptions, we found ourselves back in "Murderers' Row" with ratings that were the same as before. And there we remained, with frequent preemptions, for the rest of the season. When the new season's programs were announced in mid-April it surprised no one that "The Paper Chase" was not included in the CBS lineup. To protests from the press and in reply to the tens of thousands of letters it received from disappointed viewers, the network explained that "The Paper Chase" simply did not generate sufficient interest to make it a viable program."

DRIVING ALONG the Pacific Coast Highway, on my way home from the wake of "The Paper Chase," I held a small interview with myself. I was eager to discover, now that we were all washed up, how I really felt about this project that had occupied more than a year of my working life.

Q. You seem angry. Are you?

A. Yes, I am.

Q. Who're you mad at?

A. I'm not sure.

Q. CBS?

A. Why should I be mad at CBS? For paying me half a million dollars to appear in a show I really loved? For letting me play a role I found consistently exhilarating and satisfying?

Q. You've been saying such awful things about them—

A. Of course I have. And I'll go right on. To defend his creation an artist may use any weapon at his disposal—including blackmail.

Q. But you—

A. As a matter of fact, I've had a long

and fertile association with CBS going back more than forty years. It's the only network that has consistently employed me to do unusual, occasionally lunatic, and mostly, fascinating things. It also happens to be the only network that would touch "The Paper Chase." It was offered to the other networks and they passed. No—I'm not mad at CBS.

Q. How about their program executives? The ones who never favored "The Paper Chase"? Do you hate them?

A. Not really. They have their assignment from the chairman, which is to put CBS back into the first place it occupied for so many years. You don't become No. 1 with a show with a 19 percent share.

Q. Whom do you blame, then? The A.C. Nielsen Company?

A. Blame? For what? They're running a business, supplying a service that is highly appreciated by advertisers and networks alike. The fact that I detest what they do and question the way they do it is beside the point.

Q. You mistrust their findings?

A. I didn't say that—though I do, in fact, harbor a deep dislike and mistrust of all those who mess around in the delicate and mysterious area of public opinion. My personal allergy to ratings goes far back—to an evening in November, 1938, when I participated with Orson Welles in a broadcast known as "The War of the Worlds" (or, more popularly, "The Men from Mars"). That week the ratings—Crosley's in those days—indicated a figure of 3.6 for the Mercury Theater on the Air, whereas our competition, Edgar Bergen and his dummy, Charlie McCarthy, had a whopping 34.4—almost ten times as great as ours. Yet history records that it was Orson Welles, not the dummy, who panicked the nation!

Q. So then, finally, whom are you mad at? Or don't you know?

I have devoted much thought to this question over the past few months, and I believe I have found the answer. While it is true that I am not "mad" at anyone, I *am* deeply disturbed and appalled by the rising abhorrence and apprehension a force that is increasingly

mping on our lives, corrupting our culture, and undermining our sense of values. I refer to the growing influence of numbers in our society—as they are manipulated and exploited in statistics, polls, ratings, and other computerized phenomena. More and more of our decisions and choices are being conditioned and determined by numbers—to the point where these figures are acquiring an attraction and a power of their own, almost independent of the subject to which they relate. So strong have these compulsions become that we seem, at times, to be losing our capacity for free will: more and more of our movements are made in response to emotions that are, themselves, provoked and stimulated by numbers.

Americans have always loved a winner. Today, winning, in most fields, is equated with numbers, which in turn, in this anxious, inflationary society of ours, are automatically equated with money. In this wild game of huge figures, the American public is coming to resemble those passive, bewildered visitors who stand around the tables in Las Vegas and get their vicarious thrills from watching the big gamblers do their stuff—with the difference that, unlike blackjack or roulette, these numbers directly affect every aspect of every one of our lives.

Throughout theatrical history "counting the house" has been a normal and necessary habit, with the size of the audience determined by the dimensions of the theater. Today, with the advent of the electronic media, there is most no limit to the audience that can be reached by show business. This has created a state of mind in which the size of that audience—the sheer magnitude of the numbers involved—has become far more significant and exciting than the show itself.

It is natural that television, the world's dominant medium of mass communication, should be intensely concerned with numbers—especially when those numbers are directly translatable to profits. What is more difficult to understand is the attitude of the press or whom the A.C. Nielsen Company has become a source of news only slightly less important than the Associated Press. The same newspapers that in their critical and editorial columns inveigh against the nefarious influence of ratings on the quality of television entertainment furnish their

readers with daily headlines on the latest results in the numbers race. Thus we learn, not from a trade paper but from a headline in the *New York Times*, that: "ABC TOPS RATINGS—CBS IS CLOSE." The following week the *Los Angeles Times* revealed the earthshaking news that "COMEDY RERUNS RANK AT TOP OF WEEK'S NIELSEN," soon followed by the staggering information that "50TH ALL-STAR CAME TOPS WEEK IN NIELSEN GAME." When the President finally made his energy speech, what he said was deemed of equal importance with the fact that he received a 63 percent share.

The virus has spread to the other arts. The astronomical costs and "record-breaking" grosses of a successful film are followed with rising excitement by far more patrons than will ever go near the theaters when the film finally reaches their neighborhood. In museums, too, the main excitement seems to be generated by numbers: the highly publicized attendance figures of the recent Monet, Rothko, and Tutankhamen shows have thrilled far more vicarious art-lovers than will ever visit the buildings that housed those exhibitions. Even in the prestigious publishing business, a highly promoted and publicized best-seller acquires an aura that often bears no relation to the contents or quality of the book. And if the book sections of the country's leading newspapers bring us epic accounts, every Sunday, of six- and seven-figure paperback purchases and movie sales, it is because news editors know that this mention of millions is an aphrodisiac few of us can resist. It is the numbers that bring on the orgasm.

WHERE HAVE these ruminations led us? What have they to do with "The Paper Chase"? They are a sobering reminder that in this overwhelming swirl of numbers the life and death of a television series is a very minor (though not totally insignificant) event. In the months that have elapsed since our cancellation, much of my righteous indignation has evaporated. And most of my personal malice. As I sit here, looking out over the ocean, in this house that was paid for with money earned in the mass media, I reflect that I, too, for all my high-falutin' talk, have long been a

habitual and active player in this big-time numbers game.

Its rules have changed substantially since I started to play many years ago. Increasingly tied to its "ratings," network broadcasting is richer, tougher, but less free and imaginative than it was. Gone are the days when CBS, in the name of public service, would carry a "sustaining" show that advertisers were too timid to sponsor. Gone, too, for better or for worse, are the giant motion-picture studios where it was possible, once in a while, to sneak a *Julius Caesar* or a *Lust for Life* past the front office into the studio program. Today, with the hot breath of inflation on their necks, the dream of a "blockbuster"—with grosses of \$50 or \$70 or even \$100 million—dominates and stultifies most filmmakers' thinking.

The future mutations of the mass media remain uncertain, though it seems probable that we shall be moving in the direction of yet more technological variety, more numerous outlets, and ever greater numbers. For the resolute and imaginative there will be new, uncharted, independent roads to creative and material satisfaction. For those who prefer to remain within the Establishment and to play the big time for ever-rising stakes, the opportunities will, without doubt, be greater than ever. But whatever forms the new structure of show business assumes, is it too much to hope for a day, in the not too distant future, when it will not be said of a television show of high quality, generally praised and viewed each week by an audience of 12 million people, that it "has not generated sufficient interest to make it a viable program"? □

HARPER'S/DECEMBER 1979

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THE POPE'S GROUPIES

Flacks vobiscum

by David Sanford

THE FIRST WEEK in October, to judge from what was on television and in the papers, America went Catholic. It was a collective act unrivaled in the annals of crowd psychology since the Beatles' first American tour in 1964, perhaps the best modern precedent for Pope John Paul's trip ("journey," they called it) to America.

Though he was not the first Holy Father to do Yankee Stadium, John Paul II was the first to attempt a seven-day gig in America with one-night stands in the big markets of New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Des Moines, and Washington. He had "sell-out" crowds at every stop. In fact, a rock promoter named John Sykes, who works for CBS Records, was so impressed with the pope's drawing power that he thought the church had erred in not charging admission. "Certain artists, people will pay anything to see," Sykes said. "I put Frank Sinatra and the pope in that category." Sykes was much in awe of John Paul's advance work: "We could never get Walter Cronkite or John Chancellor every night for one of our rock acts.... Whoever is handling TV for the pope has good contacts in New York."

The reviews were unanimous: the pope was a smash, boffo at the box office. Had his contract not called for a

limited engagement, the show might have had a longer run on the road than *Grease* has had on Broadway. *Time's* cover pronounced the pope a "Superstar," and everyone (by actual count) just loved him, although a few of the critics said they felt he was better than some of his material, which tended to be standard repertory stuff, particularly the routine he did on abortion and birth control. But as rendered in that strong Polish baritone, the lines sounded fresh enough to those who weren't listening.

One knew, because of the pope's peregrinations in Poland and Mexico, that this man of bright eye and manly smile is not merely infallible but lovable. Reading the dispatches from Warsaw and hearing of his intentions to visit Iowa, I made plans of my own to tape the television coverage and read the papers carefully. I knew that he would be surrounded by his flock—and the ecclesiastical equivalent of groupies—but who would have thought that a pastoral visit would occasion journalism on a scale unlike anything seen since the assassination of John F. Kennedy? As it turned out, one could not see and read everything, because there was too much, a true glut. If you stayed up to catch the midnight specials, you overslept "Good Morning America."

It was an amazing spectacle. The priest commentators hired by the networks to assist with exegesis and the play-by-play would occasionally reiterate (but with less and less conviction)

that the office is more important than the man. Nevertheless, it was clear enough to anyone who remembers Pius XII that the new pope's got Personality, that he is a complicit object of the consumer culture, an icon for our age and a commercial asset to the church. By the time he had flown back to the Vatican at the end of his week here, he had collected a bulging B. Altman's bag of clippings inscribed with the faculties of the pope's idolaters in the lay press and, for the sound effects, a set of cassettes. But what to make of all those words?

For many in the audience, including James Reston of the *New York Times*, the pope's performance provided welcome comic relief. "Pope John Paul II," Reston wrote in his column, "arrived in Washington just when we needed him. In recent days, this city has been down in the dumps, thinking about oil, prices, and politics—an unholy trinity—but at least for a little while he has turned our minds to different and nobler things." Mr. Reston might also have said that for a brief unwelcome time many reporters took leave of their faculties.

There he was on a \$10 million trip to America, cruising the streets in limousines, alighting here and there to denounce materialism, hedonism, consumerism, and physical pleasure. There he was on a pastoral visit, reading translated words bearing on American

David Sanford is the managing editor of *Harper's*.

* The pope is more popular than the Beatles, who, according to John Lennon, were more popular than Jesus; where this leaves Jesus is not clear.

ublic policy, and hardly a rude word as heard from the 14,000 credentialed sathen of the secular press. Never ind what effects his pontifications ight have had on the restive flock of merican Catholics, many of whom ad been hoping that this kindly pastor ight move abreast of the people's sins id give them sanction. He didn't do at; his message was neither so modn as his Boeing 747 nor so up to date his other means of conveyance—tele- sion. But so what? said pundit about ntiff, he's a *mensch*. Voices all around ggested that the preachments would ve little effect, which is yet another ay of saying that the Pope Show was *divertissement*, an entertainment, a ast that would quickly enough pass ough the system and be gone.

BUT HAD THE Massachusetts primary been held in October, this pope could have beaten Teddy Kennedy. Indeed, there as not a dime's worth of difference tween the way Pope John Paul ured the country and the way a Dem- rat runs for the White House. The pe could have done it, not only be- use he clearly had the good wishes the millions but because the Ameri- n press—the bulk of it—got swept o in an ecumenical wave and began behave as if he were everybody's pe and this were one big, monolithic atholic nation, give or take a few sgruntled females who feel tugged to e priesthood. The seven days seemed ce an eternity.

Jeff Gralnick, who supervised tele- sion coverage for ABC, bragged that ur plans are as detailed and complex e those for any Presidential trip." hey were that, and as much can be id for most organs of the American edia, which attacked the story of the pe's sojourn with the joyous aban- on of a flack for the archbishop. *Time* signed twenty correspondents and ringers, its Rome bureau chief, and irtly-five photographers to produce e "JOHN PAUL, SUPERSTAR" cover. *ewsweek* gave two consecutive covers il Papa, and the *New York Times* rned out feature copy by the pound, eluding the Pope's menu on Aer Lin- us. Reston, himself a master of the mily, wrote not one but three col- nns finding morsels of significance in an Pablo Segundo's comings and

goings: "At the very least," Reston wrote, more reverentially than pro- foundly, "Pope John Paul II has dem- onstrated something we have forgotten in America and even tend to deny: that a solitary individual with strong con- victions and noble aspirations still touches the heart of a vast continental nation." Ah, yes, one man can make a difference.

"WE LOVED HIM," gushed the *New York Daily News* on its front page. The *New York Post* spilled red ink all over

its first page to say, "HI, THERE! NEW YORK GOES WILD ABOUT THE POPE." The coverage was so smothering that one nearly forgot that this also was the week in which fell Yom Kippur, the most sacred day of Judaism, and also that the Dalai Lama was in the midst of a seven-week twenty-two-city U.S. tour that was of great interest to 200,000 American Buddhists. A large effort was made to enlist the enthusiasm of non-Catholics—Protestants and Jews being the only ones who officially count—and

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the papers ran stories with headlines such as "JEWS AND PROTESTANTS LAUD VISIT." Other articles prayed over the remains of anti-Catholic prejudice (which officially died in 1960, thus making it possible for Teddy Kennedy in 1979 to kiss the pope's ring in public without engendering fears that if elected President he would invite His Holiness to govern the nation).

It was very chummy of us all to join in the spirit of the occasion, and the enthusiasm was real enough, but the significance of it was, well, elusive. The pope's visit certainly did not establish the correctness of the rather paranoid vision of Peter Steinfelds, author and *Commonweal* editor, that "perhaps the pope's visit will finally convince the media that religion is a serious reality. . . . Polls show that 90 percent of Americans believe in God and pray often, but most of the serious observations about this country are made by the other 10 percent." A Martian visiting New York and sampling the press the week the pope was with us might have concluded that Steinfelds had his wires crossed.

Whether religion is "a serious reality," to repeat Steinfelds's curious phrase, is quite beyond me to determine, though I had always assumed that it was. But there was no consensus among the thinkers and theologians of the press on the matter of how to account for the heartening apparent lack of anti-Catholic bigotry. Reston thinks that what has happened is that "contending forces found that they could not destroy one another [and] found a compromise in the spirit of toleration." To Richard L. Strout, the house Unitarian at the *Christian Science Monitor*, who writes the TRB column in *The New Republic*, the answer simply is that "nobody is prejudiced anymore because nobody takes [religion] that seriously: you have to believe in something first to be bigoted." Perhaps it is just as well that when the pope comes to town, instead of embarking on holy warfare, we all just agree on the twinkle in his eye and leave it at that.

AS I READ the papers and watched television, I was more inclined than I would have expected to be to wonder whether what I was reading and seeing had been written by believers, by Roman

Catholics free within bounds to be cranky about the church, or by persons otherwise denominated who suffer from an overcompensating reverence for a faith not their own. Some of the most unselfconscious, adoring prattle was, I have no doubt, turned out by agnostics trying too hard not to be conspicuous and knowing that occasions calling for the welling up of bogus religiosity are blessedly rare and therefore to be cherished. A little sanctimony goes a long way.

Which reminds me of Richard Threlkeld, a CBS correspondent who, for a time, anchored the network's weekday morning news but who now has been relegated to doing what is called the "cover story" on the acclaimed, overrated "Sunday Morning" show. Threlkeld goes about the country in his bush jacket, and checks back weekly with a video essay. He, like nearly everybody on "Sunday Morning," is in the thrall of Charles Kuralt, a pudgy anchor man of philosophical streak and sentimental phrase, whose bathetic style reduces everything to chicken fat. Threlkeld's summary panegyric on the pope exhibited the Kuralt on-the-road style in *excelsis*: "He got to see quite a bit of America this week, and quite a few Americans." Mr. Threlkeld began, "He blessed us, every one. He hugged us, and we hugged him back." Threlkeld seemed to have been all over with His Holiness, asking people of simple faith silly questions, one of which elicited the following reply from Pat Joyce of Dorchester Street in South Boston: "Well, I think he's a very, very happy man for all he's been through. He's been through an awful lot, comin', you know, from a Communist country."

True to the pope's itinerary, Threlkeld interviewed Irish Catholics in Boston, Polish Catholics in Chicago, and Spanish-speaking Catholics at St. Anselm's in the South Bronx: he concluded his report thus:

"There was something miraculous about the whole week. There were times when we felt he was one of us and times when we were simply in awe of him. You didn't have to be Catholic to admire him, to want to see him, be close to him. It was quite a week. Maybe America needed it. In the past twenty years our leaders have all either died on us or disappointed us. One after another they have broken our

hearts. This week we met somebody else."

Mr. Threlkeld should report to Te Patrick for deprogramming. The pop appearances to the contrary notwithstanding, is not the President of the United States. He is not everybody's pope, the Levy's Rye of organized religion. He is the spiritual leader of 70 million Roman Catholics worldwide and 54 million in the United States that is all and that is quite enough. Adherents believe in miracles, and Pole in Chicago might regard the pope's visit as a miracle, but does CBS News even on Sunday morning? A mother in South Boston might go into a swoon might "want to be close to him," but for Richard Threlkeld to make a fool of himself over Karol Wojtyla is to demonstrate how commercial television news misuses its franchise, albeit it safely popular ways.

Bert Quint, also with CBS but in Rome, wrote a piece on the media-pop for *TV Guide* in which he all but admitted to being putty in his hands. The pope had "turned what for fifteen years had been a dull story for reporters and viewers alike [i.e., the Vatican beat into a series of exciting television events." The pope walks, he talks, he shakes hands, he pauses for the cameras, he laughs, he jokes, he's a real fun fellow. Quint, smitten, confesses he once was cynical. He had actually thought, bless him, that this erstwhile stage actor turned pope might not be utterly spontaneous, that he might be "cultivating an outgoing, affectionate image." But, thank goodness, "the pop has proved the cynics wrong. The warmth is real, the ebullience genuine. Just how a mere mortal man of CB could adduce such a truth Quint doesn't say. Quint ought to go cover an ayatollah and work on dispassion.

Alexander Cockburn of *The Village Voice*, who is my kind of guy, saw the press's pandering for what it was:

After three or four days of the papal visit I expected the newscasters to go onscreen in chasubles. As it was, each commentator was flanked by some advocate of popery, explaining the religious functions in that glitzy voice which symbolizes faith in the presence of the divine. No equal time for the Enlightenment. . . . The atheists and holders of irreligious opinion were banished from city rooms, editorial

suites, and newscasters' booths and frenzy took over.... Sniffing up the incense, and buttressed by grossly inflated crowd predictions and estimates, the boys and girls of the Front Page beat their notebooks into rosaries and sank to their knees in awe at His presence. Sheep to the altar, in a unity of baa-ing that conflated the good things the pope said, and the awful things the pope said, into monotonous cant.

men.

POPES CANNOT be all things to all men, and except in superficial ways, John Paul II didn't try. Still, he had a much-remarked-upon ability to ingratiate himself with any crowd and to be a living, eathing Rorschach blot into which e could read whatever meaning one ed. The pope became for the press—o knows about the public?—just ch a projective test. And his American campaign became an occasion for lumnists and commentators to give nt to their favorite passions.

For Ellen Goodman, columnist for e *Boston Globe-Washington Post* riters Group, the visit was an opportunity to fret over women's place in the urch. "I couldn't help but think," she id obsessively, of "the spirits who ve sought reform" and the "struggle r a world in which women are not ly equally vulnerable to the heavens it equally valuable to the earthly intutions." For Tom Wicker of the *ew York Times*, the pope's good rds for the poor became the weak read from which he dangled a col-n exhorting the United States, in its vn self-interest, to make nice to Nic-agua. William F. Buckley cracked: The pope should have been fore-armed against any suggestion by Mr. nnedy that socialized medicine be elared a doctrinal law of the church." rtunately for Mr. Buckley and his vn Catholic faith, the pope, in matters f social justice, doesn't get much into ecifics. For Jimmy Breslin, a col-nist for the *New York Daily News* ho does beer commercials in his off ours, the pope's stated concern for the or occasioned some harsh words out Mammon and the observation at the pope "is, I believe, the first al man I ever have seen on televi-on." For Walter Saunders, who writes out television for Denver's *Rocky*

Mountain News, "Pope John Paul II ... hit a home run on the American television screen in the World Series of adulation."

The pope was a man for all formats, and there was even the chance for press lords to make some loose change, in the form of advertising revenue, from the pope's presence. In full-page ads in the *New York Times*, WOR Radio, "the heart of New York," thanked the wizard of Castel Gandolfo for helping New York find its soul. "The U.S. is in for a spiritual joyride," said news-ly *Newsweek* in its paid page of the *New York Times*. "From our hearts. Welcome," said Lord & Taylor. "Welcome, Your Holiness," said Crouch & Fitzgerald ("Fine luggage since 1839"). And so on and so on. In Denver, where I happened to be during part of the pope's visit, the late-night coverage of the events done by NBC was sponsored locally by the archdiocese of Colorado, thus giving the network's news output the air of odd-hour religious broadcasting.

In preparing to say my piece I col-

lected a morgue full of clippings, by far the majority of which are redolent of press agentry for the Vatican. I cannot remember a news event in which so much that was said and written by professional journalists contained so much puffery. But as Henry Fairlie has pointed out, there is a deep longing "in this sour age to behold and [to] believe in a good man." Maybe that accounts for it. But to what purpose? Conor Cruise O'Brien, editor of the *Observer* of London, noted in an article that ran in the *Times* of New York that wherever the pope had gone, in Ireland and in the United States, crowds were said to be "profoundly moved." Such is often said by commentators whose job it is to fill the void with appropriate words, some of which unfortunately turn out to be puerile. A crowd attending a papal Mass would have to hoot and jeer in order to appear to be other than profoundly moved. But "moved to do what?" asked Mr. O'Brien. That's a very good question. □

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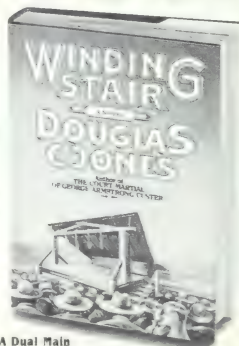
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TUGS

Living the life of the harbor

by Edward Hoagland

CAPTAIN ARTIE BIAGI, of the Moran Towing Company, broke into this organization of mainly Irish tugboatmen in New York Harbor more than thirty years ago, when he was a young man job-hunting with a hangover. By a fluke, he fell into conversation with an individual in the adjoining booth of the men's room at Maritime Association headquarters near the Battery. He couldn't see the fellow, but—in that day

more innocent than our own—after they had chatted a while about his getting drunk the night before at the Red Men Lodge in West New York, New Jersey, and about his previous jobs in a tar yard and driving a laundry truck and as a deckhand on an army tug that had gone clear to Baffin Island, he learned that his companion was a magnate of the shipping industry. Another tug captain of Italian ancestry—at the time a runaway from an orphanage, hanging

about the docks on the Lower East Side—landed his first job when a paternal Irishman took pity on him and let him “ham” on his boat, working at first for just his meals.

Biagi's mother was German, and his father's mother Scotch, so it's an accident of American sociology, he says, that he is called “Italian.” Round-faced, soft-chinned, he is laconic on the bridge of a ship when giving directions for docking, but then talkative when he gets back to the wheelhouse of his tug. Ten years ago, when I first went out on the water with him, he was servicing the *S.S. United States*, the *English Queens*, and the *Raffaello*, as well as the usual miscellany of tramp freighters and harbor barges, from a big 4,300-horsepower tug called the *Teres*. Now, close to retirement, he has the 1,200-horsepower *Christine*, a light schedule of two days on and two days off, and a crew—mate, engineer, cook, and deckhand—each full of memories too. Bobby Perlitz, the deckhand, is a gimpy after forty years of working on the waterfront that, to oblige him, Biagi uses a flimsy ladder Bobby can still manage to lift for the risky business of climbing from the *Christine* to the deck of the ships Biagi docks.

New York's port, at least when it's strike-free, is the busiest in the country with more than 7,500 arrivals in the course of a year. Opposite Sandy Hook, which curves into the sea to form the sheltering lip of the outer harbor, every ship picks up a pilot, who guides it up the channel, past Gravesend Bay, through the Narrows between State



Ken Robbins
Edward Hoagland's most recent books are *The Edward Hoagland Reader*, edited by Geoffrey Wolff, and *African Calliope*, both published in September by Random House.

land and Brooklyn, under the Verrano Bridge, nearly seventeen miles together, to the Battery in Lower Manhattan—though most now turn aside a little before that. They will be up in the bleaker reaches of Brooklyn, or else head on around Staten land, past Robbins Reef, Constable Hook, Sailors Snug Harbor, and Shoots Island in Kill Van Kull, up Newark Bay to the extensive new facilities for intainerships in New Jersey, much more accessible to interstate truck traffic than the congested old streets of Manhattan would be.

A tug or two will assist in tight passages and at the docking. The responsibility of the pilot who got on at Sandy Hook ends when Biagi or another tugboat captain boards the vessel and the deckhands heave their lines up to the ship's seamen. These seamen, who are a worldly, various assortment of Japanese, Indonesians, Germans, Slavs, and Danes, peer silently over the railing as the "monkey's fist"—the weight at the end of the rope—flies up to them. Fresh off the ocean, they look wind-blown, moist, and foreign. They are snug-tied with the tugmen, as the seamen are with them, and, high as they are, they have a vigorous air, a recast fellowship with one another, it also a sightseer's eagerness in new territory.

Biagi, spruce on the bridge, where they are always intimations of the nineteenth-century social order, radios instructions to Red Nordberg, his mate on the *Christine's* wheelhouse—"Come ahead slow," "Come ahead full," "Easy back"—which Nordberg, who is often at sight of the ship's bridge under the flare of her bow, confirms by tooting on the tug's whistle. Before the era of walkie-talkies, this sort of communication was done from the bridge of the tug with a police whistle, and if there is a second tug, working at the stern, so the ship's whistle. Before radios were used in the harbor at all, a tug could have to take a run past the company's office at the Battery after competing a job, and the dispatcher routed the next assignment through a window with a megaphone. If the message was more complicated, he would have a towel and the tug captain tied up and went to a pay phone. Still further back, before there were such luxuries as offices and telephones, rival tugboats simply sailed out to Graves-

end Bay at dawn and bargained against each other from ship to ship.

Both Biagi and Nordberg, whose brush-shaped, red moustache swallows most of his smiles but who even so looks boyish, have won citations for bravery displayed in watery emergencies. Over the years, they—and Richard Decker, the shy, fastidious engineer, who comes from a long line of Staten Island oystermen—have rescued people scalded in boiler explosions and sailors swimming between patches of blazing oil. They have seen people drown after being accidentally jostled off the Staten Island Ferry, and many bluish, eel-gnawed bodies of suicides and murder victims. Once Biagi was bent over the bitt on a barge moored under the Brooklyn Bridge when a tremendous splash occurred right next to the bow. He turned and noticed a white object rising underwater. It looked like some kind of ball. He realized it was a bald head, instead. Mournfully, the man's face bobbed out of the water. He was alive, still conscious. Their eyes met. "I want to die," he said very calmly, because Biagi had started to kick off his workboots. Then the current caught him, in the sudden way it has in the East River—six knots strong—and gave him his wish.

LIKE MOST TUGBOATMEN, all the *Christine's* crew are family men, their children now grown up. That was why they never went to sea. Only the cook, Leo, has even been divorced. Leo Catarina, born in the Philippines, is agile and thin, with a crouching posture that he has probably developed from stooping in so many galley hatches to peer out at the water and up the sides of big ships. He fills in as an extra deckhand occasionally, and though he wears a dashing, drooping moustache that makes him look younger than the others, and though he recently married a young Italian girl in Brooklyn who has given him a new baby, outdoors he appears frail. His favorite stint, he says, was a period of years he spent cooking on a little tug on Lake Champlain, taking his son along sometimes for the trolling that they did from the fantail as the boat pushed a barge. In the spring they might have a frost, and the tug would crunch through, breaking virgin ice—ice so clear and new it

shattered like a crystal a hundred yards ahead of them.

At lunch, Leo, serving chicken, liked to ask me, "Do you want white meat, dark meat, or Filipino meat?" I took it to be the forestalling device of a man used to explaining the color of his skin.

Leo, and Bobby, from Rockaway, and Decker, too, calculated their exacta and box bets on the horses as they ate, the galley a clutter of *Doc's Daily Racing Selections*, *American Turf*, and *Racing Star*. Decker, who got his start on the water in 1933 as a mess boy on a buoy tender, has impaired hearing—"boilermaker's ears"—from listening to the roar of all the diesels he has tended (tug engines being adaptations of railroad diesels originally, he said). Like other engineers I had encountered, he seemed slightly skittish, as if the deafening solitude of the engine room might accentuate the quirks and wariness that any person began with. Yet, hearing of his four children, seven grandchildren, whom he flies to visit on vacations, I realized that tugmen lead double lives. Most of them insist upon the point, and regale each other with tales of their soft lives at home.

Seamen, too, lead lives that are far-flung and sharply divided. But many tugboatmen go back and forth twice a week from the desolate, salt-stained piers of Red Hook to mow the lawn in an eminently domestic suburb of the city. Some keep a second, hideaway household in one of the five boroughs, as well. Sleeping on a plank bunk, in the roar of the engine, in a dingy cabin, pulling hawsers half the night, backs aching—till they do it in their dreams for hours afterward—with a diesel galley stove, a firehose curled around the toilet in the john, they try to figure how to spend the extraordinary money some of them earn.

BIAGI HAS SEEN TO IT that his son has also become a docking pilot (against the opposition of a few senior harbor Irishmen), and this has worked out well. Artie, Jr., in contrast to his father, is as edgy as a bullfighter. Tall, dark, gruff, and gravel-voiced, obsessed with his job and pugnacious about it, he is a rising star in the rather nervous hierarchy of docking pilots, and Biagi, Sr., both enjoys his prominence and wor-

ries about his fits of perfectionist pique. In a jump suit, with comb in hand, he appears to be continually on show, at least to an audience of one, but is not without humor. Dressed fussily in suede, he will stride onto an 800-foot tanker and tell the guard and the third mate, as he climbs the long staircase, that no, he's not the pilot, he is an investor who has bought the ship and wants to inspect the bridge. In fact, it's traditional that top tugboat pilots dress spiffily—they wore dark suits, derby hats, and chesterfields in the old days, as Biagi, Sr., much impressed then, remembers—and that they also be contentious and jittery.

Each of the Biagis earned around \$70,000 in 1978. After the purchase of a home in the exurbs and a fine car, what does one invest in? Other tugmen have sunk their funds in land development, a restaurant, stocks and bonds, a racehorse. The Sandy Hook pilots, who enjoy a similar monopoly in practicing their trade, make about \$15,000 less—a Senator's salary. They may live all over, in Maine or Florida or the Carolinas, flying in and out of New York City at biweekly intervals. In Artie, Sr.'s case, he bought a twenty-

seven-acre trailer park in the Poconos, expecting that his daughter and her husband would run it, but instead they got divorced. With the sort of energy he devoted to learning harbor charts many years ago, he has been taking flying lessons, there in Pennsylvania, living in a big empty house and studying the interesting points of instrument landing—wondering whether he might not have had a better time from the beginning if he had aimed to be an airline pilot.

Biagi has heart trouble, Nordberg is recuperating from an abdominal operation, Decker is sixty-three and fragile-looking. And so they all are full of life-and-death stories. Biagi remembers the smell of the nursing home where his poor mother, with sheepskin padding on her hips and elbows to prevent bedsores, finally died. On his index finger he bears a scar from when his daughter, as a baby, fell into convulsions and he stuck his finger in her mouth to try and clear her breathing. The doctor whose house they lumbered into injected her with an adult's dosage of morphine, by mistake; and yet she lived; she is in Texas now.

Being watermen, they have a spe-

cial knowledge of tragedy and peri-
The city's bodies end up bobbing in the tide, after having been mauled by the Hudson's ice all winter. And, on the boat, although a hawser rarely actually snaps, if one only "jumps" off the bilge it can kill a deckhand. The captain climbing to a ship, can fall into the rushing water between the tug and ship. Or, if a tugboatman turns alcoholic, an oddly public drama may ensue. He sits on the pier under the giant Colgate clock in Jersey City where the Chandler's truck delivers grub to Moran's tugs and his old comrades are going to see him. When they swing ashore they shake hands, give him sandwiches, maybe a coat. But he sells the coat. He's coughing. They stop again, talk to him, leave a sweater, pass a plate of food to him. Sitting once again on the frigid bulkhead next December—a figure who in better days had shared a thousand suppers in the galley—he catches the captain's eye. He is slumped over. The captain touches him. He is frozen dead.

MORE SHIPS CALLED at New York ten or twenty years ago, but they were freighters—what are now called "break-bulk ships"—with a forest of stubby cranes to reach into the several fore- and after-holds, and they were smaller. Small shipping operators and the nautical lines of the so-called developing countries still employ these, but twelve-deck car-carriers, such as shuttles to America loaded with Toyotas, and other specialty ships have become the muscle of maritime commerce. There are vessels hollowed out to carry nothing but grain, or scrap metal, and innumerable containerships that carry not a load of loose cargo loaded by means of slings and pallets, but two or three thousand aluminum boxes that set onto flatbed tractor-trailers, shipped off unopened to almost as many destinations. A minimal crew can clear the harbor efficiently in a single day if their arrival is timed to coincide with the longshoremen's morning shape-up.

Containerships have a simplified profile, with all the housing at the stern. On the Jersey piers, jumbo black cranes like dinosaurs lean over them to speed the work. Some have been built for drive-on, drive-off convenience, and an American variation of

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e model is the LASH ("Lighter longside Ship"), transporting perhaps ninety barges and a 500-ton sliding derrick that rolls back and forth hoist them. Again, it isn't nearly pretty a craft as an old-fashioned lighter, but the harbor—a place of release, of payoffs, pilferage, "piecing" somebody off, where a man you ed to notice walking along in a ecked shirt ("Mr. Pier 8") might ve had \$20,000 in his pocket—is tting so automated that soon only site-collar crime will be left.

In Buttermilk Channel, between ooklyn and Governor's Island, we incepted a cargo ship, the *African mercury*, which was painted black and d and white, with two seahorses on e bow. The *Diana* was also there, help Biagi dock it. Because in e surge of current the ship would ve turned like a weathervane if left its own devices, until finally the bow inted into the "wind," or current, agi positioned the *Christine* and *iana* at bow and stern to counter this entuality and keep it broadside as it itered the slip at Brooklyn's Pier 11. ship is like a seesaw when broadside the hop of the tide, with its fulcrum the middle. But as the bow slides ide the slip, escaping the current, e fulcrum naturally shifts aft. As the *frican Mercury's* bow got "lighter" d the stern "heavier," Biagi adsted the placement of his tugs accordingly. The whole process took ree-quarters of an hour, until the es to the dock were fast.

We then sailed the *Hellenic Splendor* from Fifty-seventh Street, Brooklyn—a much quicker operation, the ip's own propeller backing her out. he *Christine* simply fastened to her ow and acted as the rudder. Next, we iled a Japanese boat, *Blue Nagoya*, om Pier 36, just north of the Manantian Bridge on the East River; and en the LASH *Stonewall Jackson* from rooklyn. After lunch, we rendezvoused f Robbins Reef with a neat, white d green, Russian-built, Kuwaiti-wined vessel, *Al Mansouriah*, managed om Liverpool and headed for Port ewark. The captain, Biagi mentioned terward, was an Englishman born in rgentina named J. P. Kosidowski. ecause of the jumble of origins and estinations, I thought of Józef Korze- iowski—Joseph Conrad.

We were busy because three other

Moran tugs were out of commission. The *Cynthia* had hit a ship with her wheelhouse, in an awkward maneuver. "She tried to push the ship with her front window," as Biagi put it. The *Margot*, towing a barge, had bumped into a piling, which did no damage in itself but stopped the *Margot* dead, so that the barge she was towing rode up over her stern and hit her capstan and rear housing. And the *Elizabeth* had thrown a bolt in her reduction gear.

Late in the afternoon, as we docked the ship *Mormacaltair* in Gowanus Canal, the seamen and two longshoremen who were hauling on a stern line got careless before the ship had come to a dead halt, and the rope tangled in the ship's screw. For half an hour they diddled with it, while the ship's captain, by gently reversing engines, shook the rope, and the mate and pier boss radioed back and forth as to whether a diver ought to be called. The accident would turn serious if the propeller were torn askew. In New York the standard fee for cutting a line loose from a propeller is \$300, an honorarium that many times has been collected by a tugboatman swimming underwater with no gear but the cook's meat saw and a bandanna tied across his nose.

"Isn't that the way?" I said. "One man earns \$300 for risking his life, and another just the same money for picking up the telephone."

"It's come in handy, though," Biagi said.

In the evening at slack tide we helped a Dutch captain named Hugo Van Slegtenhorst to steer his tanker from a tank farm opposite Riker's Island in The Bronx to Ross Terminal in Kill Van Kull. She measured 748 feet long, 103 feet wide, and, lightened as she was, drew 26 feet. The controlling depth in the East River is only 34 feet, at Poor House Flats, opposite Twentieth Street in Manhattan, and so about a quarter of the load had had to be tapped off to barges before she had gone to The Bronx in the first place. On the other hand, if a ship's mast rides more than 126 feet high it will hit the Brooklyn Bridge (as happened recently with a tanker one of Biagi's friends was piloting), so not too much oil can be off-loaded.

Gazing by, we gazed at the story-book luxury of upper Manhattan almost as if we owned it. There was a

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three-quarter moon. Lower Manhattan's intricacy of windows is surpassingly beautiful when lit at night, though by day the dense cluster of buildings does not loom as large. Jammed, hypertense, they do not really go together. Each was originally some architect's or tycoon's obsession—like a single shout—so that, looked at together, they add up to an impassioned cacophony. Seen at a distance from near Staten Island, however, they seem to sail on the water, narrow as a frigate.

At dawn the water is milk-colored, and red nun buoys clang beside the channel. Burnt-yellow ferryboats cross to the Battery from St. George. I stayed several nights on the *Christine*, and Biagi would welcome the new day with his breakfast eggs—the yolks like breasts—"Good morning, dear!" Sometimes he had work to do as late as midnight and as early as five.

We docked the Dole fruit boat *Bolivar* at Pier 42, East River, and the coffee freighter *Ciudad de Cucuta* at Pier 34, Brooklyn. We sailed the *Rio Amazonas* from Pier 5, Brooklyn, and the *Rio Teuco* from Pier 2. We docked the *Asuncion*, a slender little freighter, at Pier 8, Brooklyn, and the carrier *Hoegh Target*, based in Oslo, from Pier 9, and sailed the *Delta America* from the pier at Thirty-ninth Street, Brooklyn.

Tugmen never got much "grease" in the old days, and they remain just spectators to the intrigue of drug-smuggling that goes on lately. But Leo and Bobby talked about the era when whole banana stalks would be handed to them after they had docked a fruit boat, and when the coal-barge companies gave out Christmas turkeys, and a friendly Russian ship captain, exuberant at arriving in this great capitalist port, offered his docking pilot, besides the usual gift of fur gloves, vodka, and caviar, half-an-hour with the ship's whore. Some of the British boats were crewed by Pakistanis, who kept live goats and chickens tethered on the poop deck and a stew pot cooking. You would see a couple of black women sneaking up the gangplank, first thing, as they docked, to service the crew. Nowadays, too, Bobby said, you might catch sight of a limber black woman going aboard with an amused expression—but she would be in uniform, working for Customs and Immigration.

WE SAILED the *Export Freedom* from Holland Hook at night, and took a Liberian scrap-metal ship to Pier 36 in Port Newark. We sailed the *Atlantic Song*, a Swedish containership carrying backhoes and tractors, from Port Elizabeth, and docked the gray and white *Good Master*, a Greek freighter, in Brooklyn at flood tide. We docked Dow Chemical's *Leland I. Doan* in Kill Van Kull, and the white, trim, high-riding, 697-foot South African *Alphen* in Brooklyn, and sailed the blue, 425-foot *Stubbenhuk* from Bay Ridge for Hamburg.

Biagi said that, except for purposes of calculation, he tries to ignore how big some of his ships are, in order not to be intimidated, and blocks out of his mind past near-collisions and other mishaps, of which a considerable number are inevitable in a lifetime of harbor work. Like a dancing elephant, a ship being docked turns slowly but gracefully and importantly in the current in front of a row of piers. It will swing left or right according to which way the tide is running and whether the ship is supposed to enter the slip stern-first or with the bow. The key decision for the pilot is when to start the turn. Then, by watching a point on shore, he estimates and with his tugs adjusts and coordinates its position and speed. The new containerships come equipped with bow thrusters and stern thrusters that in effect enable them to move sideways—an invention that, employed in concert with the ship's main screw, may even eliminate tugs from the docking process eventually, though they would still be needed for risky passages.

We had one nervous moment. At night, in a confined area, Biagi, on the bridge of the *Leland I. Doan*, briefly seemed to lose control. The *Doan*, a tanker loaded with God knows what combination of chemicals, yawed around in a four-knot tide as if to block the channel and drift down upon a containership that was waiting under a railroad bridge. The *Christine* alone was not strong enough to stop her, and Biagi had not asked for a backup tug to help him. Finally he saved the situation by cutting and then starting the ship's own engines, while the captain of the *Doan*, beside him, clutched the edge of a table until his knuckles turned white.

Afterward, in the *Christine's* galley Bobby, to relieve the tension, teased Decker, the engineer—"the Chief"—with American Indian jokes, said "How" to him. Decker, for his part, teased Biagi about being "only a pointer." The engine was the center of the boat—even the *Christine's* had once made a trip clear to Vietnam—and the captain "only points where it should go."

Red Nordberg, who said that he was "not a moderate drinker—what I stay I finish," talked about practical jokes he had seen played. Nailing a mate's shoes to the floor and waking him up for midnight watch, or putting cut-up rubber bands in his pipe and a lobster in his bunk, or pulling the tug's whistle by means of a rope from another tug, if they were all tied up for the night and he had brought his girlfriend to his cabin.

Tugmen, although they have seen men's papers, quickly shrug off the allegiance to ships and the sea after a job. More than any taxi driver, they are really citizens of the city. The barge the sand the skyscrapers are made of down the Hudson from Haverstraw, and get their water at Pier 3 in Gowanus Bay in Brooklyn, and tie up at night at the Moran boatyard on Staten Island for a spell of catnapping. Two bars, Frank's and Ginger's, across the street, hangouts that still charge only 30¢ for a glass of beer. Up the street there is a betting parlor. "Up the street" in waterside Brooklyn, Manhattan, Long Island City, Hoboken, and Weehawken was always where the nightlife was, and in such an enormous, sprawling dukedom, if a tugman got into trouble in one neck of the harbor he could do his drinking in another—or just cross the river. If he had a goon squad chasing him, he headed straight for the water, tiptoed down the stringpiece of the wharf, hopped onto his boat, and confidently threw the engine into full reverse—out into the harbor, simmering with light at night.

Years ago, a tugman was likely to stay with the same boat until at last he was carried off feet-first. So, once somebody learned the shape of the different vessels in the Moran fleet and knew the pattern of their running lights, he could look at the Upper Bay and see where every one of his friends was, even at night.

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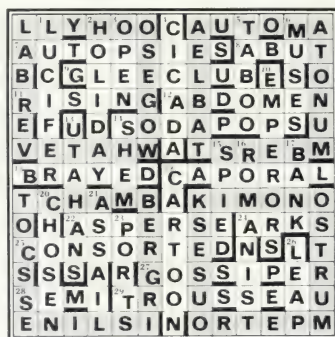
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Solution to the November puzzle

Notes for "Circuitous Reasoning"

Circuit A: amber, anagram; stable, anagram; t-O-Mat-t-O; numbers, pun; table-Au; automaton. **Circuit B:** Co-t; li(n)es; scotch, two meanings; ch(ie)-amber; amber(anagram)-ris(reversal); grisliness, anagram. **Circuit C:** se(a)-go(d); hate, anagram; whatever, anagram; ballyhoo, hidden; ho(O)sew, anagram; ver(ball)y. **Circuit D:** eskimo, anagram; ro(reversal)-uses; kimono, anagram; petrous, anagram; no-St-rum; strum(p)et, anagram. **Across:** 7. autopsies, anagram; 8. a-bu; 9. G(imme)-lee-club; 11. ri(sin)g; 12. AB-do-men; 14. so-D.A. pops; 18. B-rayed; 19. ca-p-oral; 22. asperse, anagram; 24. arks, homonym; 25. con-sorted; 27. gossip, anagram; 28. semi, anagram; 29. troussseau, homonym. **Down:** 1. lucifer, two meanings; 2. holiday, anagram of "Lido" in "ha" plus "y"; 3. open, two meanings; 4. Cl(cad)A; 5. ta(reversal)-boo; 6. m(ue)s; 10. emperor, hidden; 13. Ut(a)h(n)s, anagram; 14. she-m; 15. s-pied; 16. Romanist, anagram; 17. b(L)ank; 19. cart(O)on; 20. C-hose-n; 21. (m)ass-(j)ail; 23. ports, reversal; 25. leap, anagram of ap(p)le.

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d; 4. d; 5. a; 6. b; 7. e; 8. d; 9. c; 10. b;
11. c; 12. a; 13. b; 14. d; 15. b; 16. d;
17. a; 18. a; 19. a; 20. b; 21. d; 22. e;
23. b; 24. a; 25. d; 26. a; 27. b; 28. b;
29. a; 30. b; 31. d; 32. d; 33. a.

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PUZZLE

CODE 13

by E. R. Galli and Richard Maltby, Jr.

This month's instructions:

A simple substitution code has been arrived at by choosing a thirteen-letter word in which no letter recurs, then arranging the remaining thirteen letters of the alphabet alphabetically below it. Answers to the clues in italics are to be entered in the diagram in code. Solvers are to identify the thirteen-letter word used.

Answers include one proper name. 17A, 1D, and 20D are not in all dictionaries. As always, mental repunctuation of a clue is the key to its solution.

The solution to last month's puzzle appears on page 98.

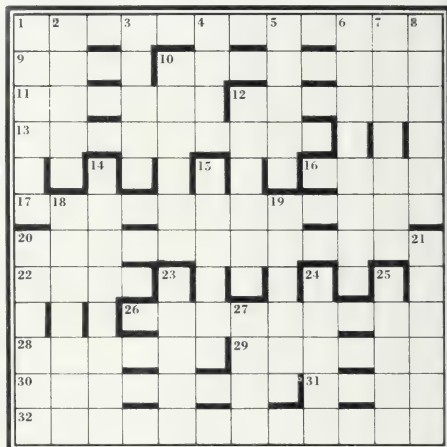
CLUES

ACROSS

1. *Brilliant performance from ship's captain and oarsman* (12)
9. Immunizing heart shot for Indian (4)
10. Supplies real-time breakdown (8)
11. Hollow victory: "Back Street" (6)
12. Catholic leader to hasten church grind (6)
13. Foul seven hit about one away first (9)
16. One who rarely talks about hasty flight (4)
17. Dick and Jane's dog, and Dick's dog—they investigate randomly (4-8)
20. He embraces . . . he assaults . . . it's total confusion (6-6)
22. Team of blacks? (4)
26. Participant in grown-up suit stressed heavy breathing? (4, 5)
28. Small place with border plight (6)
29. Diddle foolishly with a top (6)
30. Annoyed someone else in bed (8)
31. Being developed, wean again (4)
32. *Liquor which cost, incredibly, the heavens* (6, 6)

DOWN

1. *Fabulous male condition: itchy* (6)
2. Drink water, dropping first article two feet (5)
3. Lower liver disorders (5)
4. Birds pop in this for macaronis (4)
5. Five veer off and go (5)



6. Hart has two but his mate has four! (4, 4)
7. Potentially led race for state (7)
8. *Very unusual game ending 10-0 . . . use half of ticket* (6)
10. Threaten people covering one spot (6)
12. Pictures burlesque came in (6)
14. Canines saw parts which support idol mounting (8)
15. See, for example, what Jethro never produces (6)
18. Leo's Pub renovated for housing for 9 (7)
19. He symbolizes love, wrapping small food grinder (6)
20. *Organs designed for monkeys* (6)
21. *Rider's maneuver* (6)
23. "The Electric Company" is carried by the Spanish boxes (5)
24. Thousands devouring novel by Nabokov's mistress (5)
25. Horse around before noon—it would get you very hot (5)
27. The heart of Peggy Lee's "Happiness" (4)

CONTEST RULES

Send completed diagram with name and address to Code 13, Harper's Magazine, Two Park Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10016. Entries must be received by December 13. Senders of the first three correct solutions opened will receive a one-year subscription to *Harper's*.


The solution will be printed in the January issue. Winners' names will be printed in the February issue. Winners of the October puzzle, "Self-Explanatory," are Robert Rubin, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Harriet Reichenbach, Miami, Florida; and Mary McNair, Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan.

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